KASHMIR POLITICS

BY

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To

Raju, Beauty and Sunny
for their inspiration and diffusion
in future generations

Preface

The partition of India was as mnch crucial to Kashmir as it was to the subcontinent. Kashmir acceeded to the Indian Union under the inspirations of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. But the query is made why he decided to acceed to India without referring the matter first to the people of Kashmir! Equally baffling is the question why he did not ask for the promised referendum immediately after the ceasefire came into being in early 1948 between India and Pakistan in Kashmir! Was he not confident to win the majority vote in support of his decision? If not, why did he not have the integrity to acknowledge the weakness of his position, rather than sing with the saint and dance with the devil until 1953, when he finally moved the resolution for "Independent Kashmir" before the Working Committee of National Conference. In doing so he had sought the good wishes of Washington. Realising the gravity of situation created by Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah's shifting stance. New Delhi—out of anger and frustration, took the imprudent decision of arresting him. This gave the Shaikh a lever with which he managed to win the favour of majority of Muslims in Kashmir by orchestrating the slogan of plebiscite. He, thus, created venomous atmosphere and injected—by gradual degrees; animosity, antagonism, hostility and hatred for India and Indians into the blood of Kashmiri youth,

When Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was released in 1958, only to be rearrested after three months, he compaigned vigorously for a plebiscite and branded India as a colonial power trying to subjugate Kashmir. He managed to saturate the young Kashmiri Muslim mind with the dream of self-determination and independence from Indian colonialism. He specifically expressed the opinion that after Yusuf Shah Chak, the last independent Sultan of Kashmir removed by Akbar through force of arms in 1586, he was the first Kashmiri to walk with his head errect. This attitude infused in a way the burning desire of independence and freedom among the Kashmiri youth. They responded enthusiastically to the call given by the Shaikh.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdulla's rearrest in 1958 and his prosecution under the *Kashmir Conspiracy Case* boosted his popularity among the youth and made him the unquestioned leader of Kashmir. However, the case was withdrawn in 1964 and he was released from detention. He visited Pakistan in the same year and discussed the Kashmir issue with the Pakistan President, Field Marshal Ayub Khan. In 1965, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah proceeded on Hajj pilgrimage and took that opportunity of meeting the Chinese Premier, Chou-en-Lai, in Alegeria. It is a common knowledge that Chinese rivalry with India in Asia at that time meant that China would help any group and movement in India which surged against its territorial integrity and national sovereignty.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah's arrest at Palam airport and his internment at Kodai Kanal in Tamil Nadu and Delhi for another three years further raised his image and personality in the eyes of Kashmiri youth. On October 11, 1968, he convened the State Peoples' Convention for ascertaining consensus of opinion regarding solution of Kashmir problem. Again in January 1971, a ban was imposed on him to enter into the Jammu and Kashmir State territory; it was lifted on June 1972.

But then the whole political scenario in the State took a dramatic turn in 1975 when, overlooking the great expectations he had created among the youth in Kashmir and whose blood had been infused with *Hate-India* virus, Shaikh Mohammed Abdullah entered into an Accord with the Indian Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi, and assumed the reins of power. The slogans of plebiscite, self-determination, independent Kashmir, etc., evaporated into air and Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah spoke the language of Indian nationalism, democracy, socialism and secularism. He began to advocate for unity and integrity of India. Obviously, he left the youth in a delimma. To which of the Shaikh's stands should they give credibility? They were betrayed, disillusioned and left in wilderness. They asked whether the ceaseless anti-Indian orientation perpetrated by the Shaikh for over two decades was all a gimmick, a hoodwink, just to make a fool of them, When the things came to this pass, the Kashmiri youth—long misled and misguided; resorted to violence and terrorism; which they characterise as struggle for independence. This is the genesis of the prevailing terrorist scenario in Kashmir.

These ideas had been brewing in my mind for quite sometime, and I would occasionally discuss them with my colleagues and friends. But contemporary history is always controversial and opinions differ on many points. Nevertheless each opinion has its value and it is only the time which separate the facts from fiction.

I am thankful to Dr. K.N. Pandita—my teacher, guide and friend; who in the course of many casual sittings used to throw light on various aspects of contemporary Kashmir politics. I was always interested in his original and novel ideas on the subject.

I take the opportunity of expressing my indebtedness to Sh. Reyaz Rufai, Dr. Z.L. Jala, Sh. M.L. Tikoo, Sh. J.L. Kaul and Sh. S.N. Bhat for their occasional commissions which kept me engaged in this work.

I would also like to acknowledge the labour which my younger brothers, Ramesh Ganjoo and Ashok Ganjoo, put in out of their love and affection for me in preparing the draft of this work. This they did despite the ceaseless struggle in life, which circumstances require them to make. I hope their pride, encouragement and individualism will always prevail and inspire others.

Finally, for my father-in-law, Pt. Shivji Bhat, no words are enough. He narrated a number of events to me which proved very helpful in preparing this book. He constantly kept me harnessed to my work even at the cost of his physical and mental comfort.

None of the above named persons bear any responsibility for the views expressed in this book, which are mine alone.

(Dr. Satish Ganjoo)

Contents

1

Introduction

The fascinating Valley of Kashmir, lying at an average altitude of 5200 feet above the mean sea level, is approximately eighty-four miles in length and about twenty-five miles in breadth. The concept that Kashmir Valley was a vast mountain lake, called *Satisar*, is confirmed by the geological evidences. The existing remnants of this vast dead-water lake are the beautiful water bodies of Wular, Dal, Anchar, Hokarsar, Khushalsar and others. The old name of *Satisar* was replaced by Kash+Mir, after the name of great saint, Kashyapa, who devoted himself to religious exercises to fight the water-demon (jalodbhava). However, some scholars believe that Kashmir was called so on account of the early settlement of a semetic tribe called *Kash*, who also founded the cities of Kash, Kashan and Kashghar. But this theory is yet to be substantiated by indisputable evidences.

It is commonly believed that the present inhabitants of Kashmir are the descendants of the Aryan race, who immigrated from the south under the patronage of saint Kashyapa. In proto-historic times, the probable semitic tribes of Kashmir-Nagas, Pisacas and Yaksas; used to go to Tibet and Central Asia in summer and return to the Valley in winter to harass

the Aryans who had settled there. It was Chandradeva, a descendant of saint Kashyapa, who interposed and restored the rites of the Nila to resist these semitic tribes. This also reveals the close ties which existed between Kashmir and Central Asia from very ancient times. In fact the Central Asian landscape begins from Kashmir. The immediate neighbours of Kashmir in Central Asia-Ladakh, Baltistan and Dardistan; were integral parts of Kashmir Mandala during all periods of history down to the year 1947, when the Dogra rule came to an end.

The veritable chain of mountains which surround the Valley presents a magnificent and imposing view. To the north is great promontory of Naga Parbat, 26620 feet; and to the east stands grim Haramukh, 16903 feet. Further south is the sacred Mahadeo; followed by the lofty Gwash Brari, 17800 feet; and the mountain in whose bosom lies the sacred cave of Amarnath, 17321 feet. On the south-west is the Pirpanjal range, 15000 feet; further south is the Tos Maidan, 14000 feet; and the snowy Kaji Nag, 12125 feet. The mountains of Kashmir are infinitely varied in form and colour. The Valley is connected with the outer world by no fewer than eight mountain-passes.

In the eastern hills, there are gorgeous little Valleys. Between the flat land and mountains are sloping hills in whose laps lie delightful meadows called the *Margs* in Kashmiri. Lower down are extensive tablelands or plateaus which are called Karewas (*wudars*). Saffron, being the highly remunerative commercial crop of the Valley, has been the monopoly of these karewas especially Pampore karewa, 15 kilometres from the city. These karewas, covering almost half of the area of the Valley, are gaining importance in the economic set-up of the region as they have started unveiling their potentials for the suitability for a variety of crops besides saffron.

The basin shaped Valley of Kashmir, surrounded by mighty mountain ranges, has a large area of alluvial soil. It

may be classified into the new alluvium, which is of great fertility; and old alluvium, which is of less fertility but can produce excellent results with moderate rains. The cultivators have divided the soil of Kashmir into four categories. *Gurtu*, where soil contains a large portion of clay; *Bahil*, which is rich loam with higher fertility status; *Sekil*, it is light loam with a sandy sub-soil; and *Dazanlad*, where soil is chiefly bound on lowlying ground near the swamps. Other kinds of soils are *Kharzamin* and *Nambal*. The agro-climatic response in the Valley allows fruits, cereals and non-cereals to grow in abundance and this regional harmoney, with some technological innovation, has decreased the effect of environmental control.

The Valley develops various winds and pressure belts leading to different rainfall regions in different seasons. January is the coldest month. The spring, when snow begins to melt, is mostly cool-moist. Summer is humid and warm. However, it is breezy and pleasant in the side Valleys and mountain meadows. Autumn is dry and bracing with the maximum hours of sunshine. The people of Kashmir have divided a year into six seasons out of which different croppings emerge. The six seasons are : *Sonth* (March-May), *Grishim* (May-July), *Wahrath* (July-September), *Harud* (September-November), *Wandh* (November-January) and *Shushur* (January-March).

When the snow disappears in summer, the mountain streams—white with foam passing through the pools of the purest silver, dash down making melodious sounds. Kashmir also abounds in springs of clear transparent waters, which are associated with the quaint old snake-worship and form the useful auxiliaries to the mountain streams. Vethvatur, a spring little below Verinag, is the source of Jhelum, which drains the Valley. The tributaries of this great river are the Liddar, Sind, Pohru, Vishau, Rambiara, Ramshi, Dudganga, Suknag, Ferozepura and Ningal streams. The Valley of Kashmir is also very rich in flora and fauna, whose contribution in the regional economy cannot be underestimated.

Kashmir can claim the distinction of being the only region of India which possesses an uninterrupted series of written records of its history. The earlier known kings of the Valley are Gonanda I and Damodara I. According to Kalhana, Gonanda I was the contemporary of Kauravas and Pandavas (later Vedic period). Hasan Khuihami claims to have traced the thirty-five kings, which were missing in Kalhana's chronicle. Of the early kings who ruled over Kashmir at the beginning of Christian era, Ashoka followed Buddhism; while his son, Jaloka, reverted to the worship of Lord Shiva. The Buddhists, however, regained their strength under the patronage of the Turushka kings—Hushka, Jushka and Kanishka.

In spite of natural geographical impediments and high mountain ramparts, Kashmir had maintained close relations with the contiguous ruling principalities of Central Asia. Buddhist missionaries from Kashmir—the then great centre of Buddhism; extended their work beyond the Hindukush in Central Asian territories, China and Tibet. They bore the hazards of traversing the difficult routes for the propagation of the Buddhist philosophy in these distant lands. Most of the Buddhist missionaries who worked in Central Asia, China and Tibet hailed from Kashmir or had received their education and training in the Valley. Natural calamities took a heavy toll of life as these dedicated missionaries travelled over the fatal mountain tracks. The Buddhist scholars from Central Asia were also provided with the schooling in Kashmir.

During the reign of King Tunjina, an impending disaster of famine was averted by the miraculous arrival of countless pigeons. King Pravarasena II ruled over Kashmir from A.D. 79 to 139, and founded the capital city of Srinagar. The wicked and cruel Mihirakula who ruled over Kashmir in A.D. 515, killed hundreds of elephants for his amusement. He also ordered the execution of thousands of women, for their supposed unchastity, alongwith their husbands and brothers. Kalhana has discussed in detail the emineht ruling dynasties of Kashmir—the Imperial Karkota, Varman and Lohara.

Dulacha or Zulju, a Mongol from Turkistan, invaded Kashmir in A.D. 1320 and caused incredible tyranny, bloodshed and destruction to the people and the land of Kashmir. With the founding of Sultanate in A.D. 1339, Kashmir became a land of attraction for the Muslim missionaries, Sufis, saints and divines of Central Asia, who came in great numbers and propagated the message of Islam in the region. The foreigners began to influx in the Valley and the territory established links with the neighbouring Muslim countries. Central Asian culture, customs, habits, usages, manners, dress, diet, language and ideas penetrated into this little kingdom, which brought about a socio-cultural change in the contemporary society of Kashmir. In due course of time a new culture comprising indigenous and foreign elements came into being.

The credit of Islamising Kashmiri society goes to Central Asian saints, Sufis, artisans and men of letters. Internal disorder and turmoil compounded with Timur's invasion of Iran and other parts of Central Asia had compelled these people to leave their native land and move in search of a secure place. In doing so, they found shelter in Kashmir. At this point of time, Buddhism was being replaced by Saivism in the Valley. The Muslim missionaries found themselves face to face with the followers of Saivism. The outstanding immigrant saint, Sayyid Ali Hamadani, popularly known in Kashmir as Shah Hamadan, who planted the sapling of Islam in the Valley, was from Hamadan in Iran.

Sultan Sikander—the Iconoclast, destroyed the grand and old temples in the Valley and used their plinths and friezes for raising mosques. Hindus were offered three choices-death, conversion and exile. Some of them fled Kashmir, many were executed and most of them were converted to Islam. About seven maunds of sacred threads of the massacred Brahmans are reported to have been burnt and the sacred books of Hinduism were cast into the Dal lake. The saying goes that there virtually remained only eleven Brahman families in Kashmir, and Sikander, under the evil influence of Suh Bhat—the newly converted general, flattered himself that he

had extirpated Hinduism from the Valley. The great king, Zain-ul-Abidin's chief glory was his tolerance towards his Hindu subjects. He manifested every desire to repair the wrongs inflicted on the Hindus by Sikander.

The intellectuals and scholars from Iraq also found Kashmir as a fertile field for propagation of their faith. These scholars were encouraged and even provided jagirs in the Valley. Mir Shams-ud-Din Iraqi, who visited Kashmir twice, was the founder of *Nurbakhshiya* order in the Valley. His mission was to strengthen the roots of *Shia* faith in Kashmir. But Mirza Haider Dughlat, who ruled over Kashmir from A.D. 1540 to 1551, was not favourably disposed towards *Shiaism* and sowed the seeds of discord between the two sects of Islam, *Sunnis* and *Shias*, only to further his political interests.

With the advent and expansion of Islam in Kashmir, an interwoven Hindu-Muslim culture gradually began to emerge. Both communities influenced each other. The newly converted Muslims did not give up their old customs and traditions at once. The Hindu shrines and places of pilgrimage continued to be sacred for them. Even inter-marriages took place in the upper classes. The Muslim rulers married Hindu women and allowed them to profess their own religion. Hindus learnt Persian language and attained respectable scholarship in that literature. However, Sanskrit learning remained confined to the small Brahmanic community.

Shahmirs were replaced by the Chaks, who could not establish any stable rule. With the Mughal conquest in A.D. 1586, Kashmir virtually lost its independence and became the part of a vast empire. No doubt, Mughal rule was the era of consolidation and construction; but whatever was achieved by Kashmir during the reign of Akbar, Jahangir and Shahjahan was lost during the reign of later Mughals.

Then followed the period of brutal tyranny, the rule of the Afghans. They victimised the Hindus and Shias. Mughal

art and architecture was destroyed and razed to ground. Their brutality and cruelty crossed the extreme limits when Hindus were tied up in grass sacks, two and two, and drowned in the Dal lake. A pitcher filled with ordure was placed on the head of a Hindu and stones were pelt on it, till it broke and the unfortunate Hindu become wet with filth. Hindus were compelled to flee the country or were killed or converted to Islam. Hindu-parents destroyed the beauty of their daughters by shaving their heads or cutting their noses to save them from degradation. The Afghan governors used to squeeze as much money as they could out of the wretched people of the Valley. The oppression became so unendurable that Kashmir turned with hope to the rising power of Ranjit Singh. Sikhs were also not kind to Kashmiris, but their rule was better in comparison to that of the Afghans and the people of Kashmir heaved just half a sigh of relief.

The Valley of Kashmir had been ceded by the Sikhs to the British in lieu of indemnity imposed on the Lahore Durbar. The British made it over to Maharaja Gulab Singh on March 16, 1846, for a sum of seventy-five lakhs of rupees. In this way, the territory and people of Kashmir were virtually sold to Gulab Singh by the British. Thus began the Dogra rule in Kashmir.

The creation of the Jammu and Kashmir State in 1846, through the Treaty of Amritsar, was a master-stroke of British diplomacy in Asia. No doubt, Kashmir never became a part of the British Indian domain, but the British authorities allowed only minimum operational freedom to the Dogra rulers. In fact, the British created a buffer state of Jammu and Kashmir under the title of a "Sovereign State", to keep Russia at a distance from British India and to counter the Czarist "menance" in Central Asia.

In the middle of the 19th century, the growing menace of Russian expansion in Central Asia posed a direct threat to the security of British domain in India. So there was need to create a buffer between the two rivals in Asia. Kashmir, like

Afghanistan, served the purpose. Installation of a British Commissioner in Ladakh in 1847-48 was a prelude to the forceful perpetuation of British imperialist policy in Kashmir. The British managed their Kashmir policy with extraordinary caution and subtle diplomacy.

History of Kashmir in the second half of the 19th century should be studied in the backdrop of Anglo-Russian rivalry in Central Asia. Any move on the Central Asian chessboard had its direct impact on Kashmir. The policies of the British in Kashmir were designed to fit in the scheme of their "frontier policy" in Central Asia.

In 1885, the first British Resident was appointed in Kashmir. With this started the active British intervention in Jammu and Kashmir State. Creation of Gilgit Agency, subjugation of Chitral, establishment of a Council and finally partial deposition of Maharaja Partap Singh in 1889 was the completion of British imperialist strange-hold over Kashmir. This was managed by the British through their successive Residents in Kashmir. State people's movement in Kashmir against the autocratic rule of the Dogras started in the first quarter of 20th century.

2

Emergence of National Conference

The people of Kashmir, who were humilated by the sale of their motherland in 1846, were inspired by the National Liberation Movements in Russia, India and Afghanistan in the beginning of the 20th century. Like other oppressed people of the region, the people of Kashmir believed that their liberation will sound the death-knell of imperialism, colonialism and autocratic rule. With this purpose, some prominent Muslims of the Valley— Sad-ud-Din Shawl, Maqbool Pandit, Noor Shah Naqshbandi, Hasan Shah Naqshbandi, Maulvi Ahmad Ullah Hamadani, Sayyid Husain Jajali and others, sent a memorandum to the Viceroy of India in 1926, demanding the:

1. Proprietory rights of land;
2. Representation of Muslims in government services;
3. Education facilities;
4. Prohibition of beggar;
5. Release of mosques and other religious places.

The Viceroy forwarded the memorandum to Hari Singh, the Dogra ruler of Kashmir. Perplexed by this, Hari Singh decided to punish all those who submitted the memorandum.

Sad-ud-Din Shawl and Noor Shah were expelled from the state, and the *jagir* of Hasan Shah was withdrawn. Other signatories of the memorandum apologized in writing. The Muslims of Kashmir were perturbed by the actions of Hari Singh and revolted against his orders. The Maharaja of Kashmir was compelled to withdraw the externment orders of Sad-ud-Din Shawl. This was the first conscious effort by the people of Kashmir against the autocratic rule.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, Mohammad Rajab, Qazi Saif-ud-Din Qari and Ghulam Ahmad Mukhtar returned from Aligarh on April 12, 1930, after completing their studies. It was during their stay at Aligarh that they developed political consciousness through their contacts with the leaders of Indian National Movement. This emboldened them to contribute articles in the newspapers of Lahore regarding the atrocities of an autocratic rule in Kashmir.

No serious political party existed in Kashmir up to this time. It was in 1923 that Hargopal Kaul founded the Sanatan Dharm Sabha, with its headquarters at Rughnath Mandir, Srinagar. But the sole objective of this Sabha was to help Kashmiri Pandits in rehabilitating themselves after they received education at educational institutions outside the state. In 1924, many educated Kashmiri Pandits joined the Sabha, and they succeeded in developing contacts between the Kashmiri Pandits living in the state and those who had settled in different parts of India. Subsequently the Sabha started drifting towards politics.

The Muslim students, who had returned from Aligarh formed a small group with the objective of looking to the interests of the Muslim of Kashmir. It were Mohammad Rajab and Maulvi Bashir Ahmad who opened a secret *Reading Room* at Syed Ali Akbar, Srinagar. The *Reading Room* worked as springboard for political discussions and anti-government propaganda. A Committee was constituted to collect funds for the perpetuation of this *Reading Room*. After sometime, a room was taken in the Zainakadal locality and the *Reading Room*

was shifted there, but only to be re-shifted to the residence of Mufti Jalal-ud-Din at Fatehkadal. Election of the office-bearers of the *Reading Room* was held later on and Mohammad Rajab and Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah were elected as President and Secretary respectively. The following members were also nominated:

1. Mufti Jalal-ud-Din;
2. Hakim Ali;
3. Master Ghulam Rasul;
4. Ahmad Shah Fazli;
5. Hakim Ghulam Murtaza.

In this way *Reading Room Party* came into existence. Regular meetings were now being organized in the *Reading Room*. The Party also managed to obtain statistics regarding Muslims in government service, and published them in the newspapers of Lahore—*Inqilab*, *Mazloom Kashmir*, etc. Later on these figures were also submitted to the Glancy Commission.

Ghulam Ahmad Ashai was forcibly retired from State service for his so-called "anti-government" activities. He joined the *Reading Room Party* and renamed it as *Muslim Youngmen's Association*. After sometime the elections of the Association were held in which Ghulam Ahmad Ashai was elected as President and Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah as Secretary. The other members were:

1. Ali Mohammad Shah;
2. Hakim Ali;
3. Hakim Mohammad Safdar;
4. Mohammad Rajab;
5. Hakim Ghulam Murtaza;
6. Prizada Ghulam Rasool;

7. Ahmad Shah Fazli;
8. Prizada Ghulam Ahmad;
9. Ghulam Mohammad Khan;
10. Ghulam Hasan Khan; and
11. Ahsan Ullah.

Moulvi Mohammad Yusuf Shah and Moulvi Ahmadullah Hamadani also joined the Association subsequently. It was Moulvi Mohammad Yusuf Shah who selected the Shaikh as leader of the Party and introduced him to the public. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah then started delivering his public speeches and demanded the government services for the educated Muslim youth, freedom of press and platform, release of religious places to Muslims and lifting of ban on religious ceremonies. After serving in Islamia High School for sometime, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was appointed as teacher in Government High School, Srinagar.

In Jammu, a Muslim Party—Youngmen's Association was already working as a substitute under the guidance of Qazi Gauhar Rahman, Allah Rakha Sagar, Ghulam Haidar Ghori, Maulvi Ghulam Haidar Shah and others. On April 19, 1931, when the Idd was being celebrated, the local police at Jammu prohibited Imam Hai to deliver a speech at Idgah after the prayers. This injured the sentiments of Muslims in Kashmir and they protested against it. After a few days, it was reported that one police head-constable, Lobha Ram, desecrated the Holy Quran in police lines, Jammu. A deputation from Jammu came to Srinagar to protest against the alleged desecration. The Muslims of Kashmir also became irritated and they threatened to rise in revolt. To defuse the situation, the transfer orders of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah from Srinagar were issued. However, these orders were put in abeyance when the Shaikh approached the then Director of Education, Mr. Wakefield. But the orders were again issued by the state government and Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah resigned from the service. This brought him into active sphere of political life.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah announced his resignation from the government service in a dynamic public speech at Khanqah-e Mualla, Srinagar. Maulana Zafar Ali Khan, Editor *Zamindar* (Lahore), was also present in this meeting. Seeing the nerve and guts of the Shaikh, he called him *Sher-i-Kashmir* (lion of Kashmir)—the title which afterwards became his identity.

In 1928, a Kashmiri Pandit girl, Durga Devi, was murdered and her body was recovered from a drain at Karan Nagar locality in Srinagar. Some cases of cow slaughter were also reported. This naturally perturbed the Pandit community of Kashmir and they compared all these happenings with the brutal aristocracies perpetrated against them in Afghan period. These incidents built up communal tension and a resultant stir in the Kashmiri Pandit community.

The Holy Quran Movement, inspired by some religious-minded people, gained momentum in Jammu. Anti-government posters were issued in the city and smuggled into the Valley of Kashmir by Abdul Majid Qureshi. One person, namely Mohammad Ismail of Fatehkadal, was detained for circulating these posters. This was the first political arrest in Kashmir.

By this time the *Majlis-i-Ahrar* and *Anjuman-i-Ahamadiyya* of Punjab also developed interest in the Muslim movement of Jammu and Kashmir state. The State government, sensing the vast involvement of and inspiration for the Muslim cause from outside the state, proposed to meet a Muslim deputation and resolve the grievances through a dialogue. A public meeting was held on June 25, 1931, at Khanqah-e-Mualla in which Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah, Maulvi Abdur Rahim, Abdul Qadir Khan and Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah delivered their spirited speeches and took an oath to serve the Muslim cause in Kashmir. Sayyid Waliullah Shah Zain-ul-Abidin and Choudhry Bashir Ahmad, who were deputed to Kashmir by the *Jamait-i-Ahmadiyya Hind* to guide and supervise the Muslim activities, also attended these public meetings. It was in one

of these meetings that the following members of delegation were nominated to meet the state authorities for discussion:

1. Mirwaiz Yusuf Shah;
2. Mirwaiz Ahmadullah Hamadani;
3. Ghulam Ahmad Ashai;
4. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah;
5. Said-ud-Din Shawl;
6. Munshi Shahabuddin;
7. Agha Sayyid Hussain;
8. Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas of Jammu;
9. Mistri Mohammad Yaqub of Jammu;
10. Sardar Gauhar Rehman of Jammu; and
11. Shaikh Abdul Majid of Jammu.

Abdul Qadir Khan, who had delivered a highly anti-government speech at Khanqah-e-Mualla, was arrested and prosecuted by the state authorities. A special court to try this first political case was established in Central Jail, Srinagar. A meeting was held on July 10, 1931, at Jamia Masjid, Srinagar, to protest against the desecration of the Holy Quran by Lobha Ram. Ghulam Nabi Gilkar, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and Maulvi Abdul Rahim were among the prominent speakers. This stimulated the provocation among the Muslims. The first hearing of the case against Abdul Qadir Khan was held at Central Jail on July 13, 1931. Muslims collected outside the jail and demonstrated in favour of Khan. Police arrested the five demonstrators which made the mob furious and they tried to set the jail building on fire. Army was called in, and unwittingly it opened fire to liquidate the demonstrators resulting in the death of following seventeen persons and causing injuries to many others:

1. Ghulam Mohammad Halwai (Jamia Masjid);
2. Abdul Khaliq Shora (Wazapora);

3. Ghulam Nabi Kalwal (Pandan);
4. Ghulam Mohammad Sofi (Daribal);
5. Ghulam Qadir Bhat (Bahaudin Sahib);
6. Mohammad Ramzan (Khanyar);
7. Mohammad Usman (Kalashpora);
8. Ghulam Mohammad Naqash (Kadikadal);
9. Ghulam Rasool Darzi (Amdakadal);
10. Amirjoo (Gojwara);
11. Abdul Ahad (Gaokadal);
12. Ghulam Ahmad Qalbaf (Fatehkadal);
13. Amirjoo Makai (Nawakadal);
14. Shabanjoo Makai (Nawakadal);
15. Abdul Khaliq (Watalkadal);
16. Mohammad Akbar;
17. Abdul Kabir.

People were infuriated at this massacre. Choas and confusion prevailed on all sides. The killed and the injured were taken in a procession to Jamia Masjid. The worst communal incidents took place when the Hindu shops at S.R. Gunj, Zainakadal, Bohrikadal, Vicharnag and other places were plundered, looted and set ablaze. Some Hindus living in different parts of the city were also victimised. In fact, the Hindus of Kashmir have always suffered because of Anti-government sentiments of the majority community. There was virtually no law and order in Srinagar, and the city was handed over to the army.

Sardar Gauhar Rehman, Mistri Mohd. Yaqub, Chowdhry Ghulam Abbas, Maulvi Abdul Rahim and Ghulam Nabi Gilkar were detained on the night intervening July 13-14, 1931. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was also arrested on July 14, 1931, at Jamia Masjid by Brig Sutherland and taken to

Badamibagh. Jamia Masjid was converted into a political platform and Dufti Jalal-ud-Din offered himself as the first *dictator*. The courtyard of the Khanqah Naqshband Sahib was choosen as the "martyrs' graveyard". Anti-government hand written posters were issued by the Muslims and distributed in different parts of the Valley. Ghulam Mohiuddin Kara, Pir Abdul Ahad Shah and Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq were also detained.

By this time the leaders of Indian National Movement developed contacts with the Muslim leaders of Kashmir. Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad came to Srinagar on August 1, 1931, and met the detained leaders. It was after 21 days that all political detenus were released. But Abdul Qadir was sentenced to five years rigorous imprisonment. However, he was released only after one and a half year. An agreement was concluded between the Muslim representatives and Prime Minister of State, Hari Krishan Kaul. But Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and his colleagues were again arrested on September 21, 1931, which perturbed the Muslims of Kashmir and resulted in anti-government demonstrations. A "war Council" was started to chalk out an action plan against the Dogra administration. Besides arranging a protest meeting at Jamia Masjid, anti-government demonstrations and processions were taken out. The army opened fire at different places resulting in the death of the following perrons:

1. Nasir-ud-Din (Chinkral mohalla);
2. Rasuljoo (Drugjan);
3. Asad Gilkar (Narparistan);

Curfew was imposed in the city of Srinagar on September 23, 1931. Fire was opened in Anantnag to disperse the demonstrators. After much criticism from within and outside of the reign of terror let loose by Maharaja, the government appointed Dalal Commission to enquire into the firing incidents.

The Muslims armed with axes, sticks, *narchus*, etc. assembled at Khanyar to take the Maharaja to task for his reign of terror. Sensing the increasing dimension of the revolt, the Maharaja took administration in his own hands and despatched his army chief, Southerland, to take the crowd into confidence and initiate negotiations with the Muslim representatives at Khanyar. Southerland managed the meeting of Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah, Sad-ud-Din Shawl and Maulvi Mohammad Abdullah Vakil with Maharaja to wash off the grievances of the Muslims. With the help of this meeting, the Muslims agreed to postpone their proposed demonstration. But breaking his promise of looking into the grievances of the Muslims, the Dogra ruler imposed martial-law in the Valley. Martial-law courts were established at Central Jail, Police Station S.R. Gunj, Police Station Kothibagh and Exhibition Ground, where summary trials were conducted.

The Muslims of Kashmir, who were settled in different parts of Punjab, became interested in the developments taking place in the Valley. A Kashmir Committee was constituted at Shimla on July 14, 1931, at the residence of Zulfikar Ali Khan. Mirza Bashir-ud-Din and Abdul Rahim Dard were appointed as President and Secretary of the Committee respectively. This Committee sent the *Jathas* to Kashmir to fight the authoritarian rule. "Kashmir Day" was celebrated in India and Burma on August 14, 1931. *Majlis-i-Ahrar* of Punjab also started to send the *Jathas* to Kashmir under the supervision of Sayyid Attaullah Shah Bukhari. These *Jathas* came to Kashmir via Suchetgarh, where they constructed a mosque which is known as "Masjid-i-Ahrar". Dr. Shaikh Mohammad Iqbal also visited Kashmir to access the situation here. He was appointed as President of Kashmir Committee.

To create a split in the Muslim leadership of Kashmir, efforts were made to take Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah into confidence. Some intrudors—Abdul Aziz Fazli, Mama Pandit and Ama Pandit; arranged a secret meeting of Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah and Hari Krishen Kaul, then Prime Minister of the state, at the latter's residence. Hari Krishen managed a telegram

from Mirwaiz to the Viceroy of India saying that the conditions in Kashmir were peaceful and confirmed the loyalty of Muslims to the autocratic Dogra ruler. According to unconfirmed sources, a yearly scholarship of Rs. 600 was sanctioned to Mirwaiz in return for his unconditional allegiance to the Maharaja. However, the supporters of Mirwaiz refute the indictment as baseless and unfounded.

Kashmiri Pandits suffered a concussion in the 1931 incidents. Kashyap Bandhu, a Kashmiri Pandit Arya Samajist, was called from Lahore to help and supervise the Pandits in their survival. He was working as sub-editor of "*Milap*" there. Sanatan Dharm Sabha was converted into Sanatan Dharam Yovak Sabha and its headquarter was shifted to Shitalnath, Srinagar. Prem Nath Bazaz was appointed as its first President. Kashyap Bandhu started the daily "*Martand*", which became the official organ of the Sabha.

On November 12, 1931, the Maharaja announced the appointment of Glancy Commission to look into the grievances of different communities of the state. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and his associates were released from the jail on the provisional condition that he would isolate himself from politics. Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah asked Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah to distance himself from politics for sometime after his release from the jail. This irritated the Shaikh and he sensed a conspiracy between Mirwaiz and Maharaja. He specifically refused to obey the "dictates" of Mirwaiz and began to deliver anti-government speeches as usual. Irritated by the activities of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, Mirwaiz declared some "clean shaved" persons as the agents of *Mirzais*, who were misleading the Muslims of Kashmir for their personal interests. Mirwaiz passed these remarks in his sermon at Gadayar Masjid and the innuendo was directed at the Shaikh. It was after these remarks of Mirwaiz that Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah started to grow the beard. However, Mirwaiz-Shaikh rivalry was seriously felt. Maulvi Ahmadullah Hamadani, another Mirwaiz, announced his unconditional support to Shaikh Mohammad

Abdullah. The *Pirzadas* then came into open strife with Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah.

It was on October 19, 1931, that the Muslims of Kashmir submitted through Sad-ud-Din Shawl a memorandum to the Maharaja against the police atrocities. The Maharaja appointed Middleton Commission to investigate into the firing incidents in the Valley. As majority of Muslims in Kashmir were illiterate, Middleton Commission employed the services of a student from Sri Pratap College, Mirza Afzal Beg, as English translator. About 400 Muslims appeared before the Commission. But the Commission submitted a pro-government report, ignoring the sentiments of the majority of people.

The political atmosphere in Kashmir now was being gradually dominated by Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. He now embarked upon his decisive policy of eliminating his political rivals from the front line. At his instance Maulvi Ahmadullah Hamadani moved a "no confidence" resolution in a public meeting at Khanqah-e-Mualla on December 26, 1931, against Munshi Shahab-ud-Din and Sad-ud-Din Shawl. It was passed by the majority of people. The expelled leaders were alleged to be working against the interests of the Muslims.

The Maharaja of Kashmir was trying to streamline his relations with the Muslims to avoid any political uprising in the State. He was also aware of the fact that the Muslims of India had since associated themselves with Indian National Congress. He was conscious of the fact that the developing contacts between the leaders of Indian National Movement and those of Kashmir would ultimately create many difficulties for him. As a gesture of goodwill, the Pather, Masjid was handed over to the Muslims on November 1, 1931. But these efforts of Maharaja bore no fruit. Allah Rakha Sagar of Jammu gave a 24-hour notice to the State government for acceptance of Muslim demands. This was followed by disturbances in Jammu which compelled the Maharaja to seek the help of the British. On November 4, 1931, Gurkha Army arrived in the State to maintain law and order.

Besides the nomination of Prem Nath Bazaz as representative of Kashmiri Pandits, the following members were appointed to the Glancy Commission:

1. Ghulam Ahmad Ashai (Srinagar);
2. Chowdhry Ghulam Abbas Khan (Jammu);
3. Loknath Sharma (Jammu).

The purpose was to represent both, Hindu and Muslim communities in the Commission and made it secular in character.

For delivering the provocative speeches, Mufti Zia-ud-Din Poonchi was expelled from the State in January 1931. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was also prohibited to deliver any public speech. But defying the prohibitary order, he addressed a public meeting at Khanqah-e-Mualla on January 23, 1932, resulting in his arrest and six months imprisonment. Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas, Abdul Hamid Khan and Mohammad Yaqub Ali sent a protest note to Maharaja on February 11, 1932, against the detention of the Shaikh in Central Jail, Srinagar. Demonstrations and protest meetings were held in different parts of the Valley.

Maulana Mohammad Sayyid Masoodi joined the political movement at this juncture. He delievered the anti-government speeches in the protest meetings at Khanqah-e-Mualla, resulting in his arrest and meeting with the Shaikh in Central Jail. It was in detention that Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and Maulana Mohammad Sayyid decided to form a regular party—Muslim Conference.

The Glancy Commission submitted its report to the State government on March 22, 1932. The Pandit community felt that its recommendations were not favourable to it and ousted Prem Nath Bazaz from the Presidentship of Sanatan Dharam Yovak Sabha; Jialal Kilam was the new President. In April, 1932, Kashmiri Pandits launched a vigorous agitation called

Bread Movement, asking the Maharaja not to implement the recommendations of Glancy Commission. Hundreds of Pandits courted arrests in favour of their demands. Jialal Kilam, Kashyap Bandhu and other prominent Hindus supervised and guided the agitation. But, as usual, communal clashes took place in September 1932, killing the motive and spirit of agitation.

Muslim Conference was formed in 1932. A convention of this Party was held on October 14-16, 1932, at Pather Masjid under the chairmanship of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. The arrangements for this convention were made by Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah, Maulvi Hamadani and Maulvi Abdullah. The leaders of newly-formed party demanded the implementation of the recommendations of Glancy Commission.

On December 17, 1932, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah left for Lohore to attend the working committee meeting of Muslim Conference. On his return, January 20, 1933, Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah declared him a *Mirzai*, in his religious sermons at Khanqah Naqashband Sahib. This gave birth to regular clashes between the followers of Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah and Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah now known as *Bakra* and *Sher*. A "Peace Agreement" was signed by these two leaders in presence of Wazir Mohammad Khan, Superintendent of Police, to avoid the frequent clashes between their followers. After these developments, Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah dissociated himself from Muslim Conference and also from the Shaikh. Maulvi Hamadani, who was involved in a long professional rivalry with Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah, wooed the support of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. The authorities of State government also sensed the professional rivalry between the two *Maulvis* and directed Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah to offer prayers in Jamia Masjid while Maulvi Hamadani was instructed to offer the same at Iddgah on the Idd day; April 16, 1933. Mirwaiz Yausuf Shah, perflexed by the government directives, went to Iddgah by way of protest to offer the prayers. To counter the move of Mirwaiz, Maulvi Hamadani entered Jamia Masjid.

There were free clashes between the followers of two *Maulvies*, who were known as *Cheka* and *Kota*. Dogra regime took a serious note of these clashes and charged the two *Maulvies* of disturbing law and order in the Valley. Maulvi Hamadani furnished a bond for Rs. 1000 but Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah refused to furnish the same and decided to resist the pressures. The result was that the Mirwaiz was detained and taken to Udhampur jail on April 27, 1933. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was returning from Jammu on the same day and met the Mirwaiz at Kud. On his arrival in the Valley, he gave the details of his Kud meeting with the Mirwaiz. The rancorous remarks of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah were resented by the followers of the Mirwaiz. The Muslims of Srinagar altogether got divided into two rival groups—*Sher* and *Bakra*.

Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah was released from detention on May 3, 1933, on the security-bond furnished by Sayyid Attaullah Shah Bukhari. On his release, Mirwaiz criticised Maulvi Hamadani and his association with the Shaikh. It was followed by *Sher-Bakra* conflicts. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was arrested alongwith some of his close associates and then released on August 7, 1933. The activities of Mirwaiz, Hamadani and Shaikh were restricted to Jamia Masjid, Khanqah-e-Mualla and Pather Masjid, for three months. Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah and his associates—Abdur Rahim Banday, Munshi Assadullah Vakil, Khazir Mohammad Zaroo, Munshi Assadullah Hajji, Mama Barbazu and Abdul Salam Dalal, formed a party of their own and named it "Azad Muslim Conference". To counter the activities of the Mirwaiz, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and his allies formed the *Shoda Conference* under the leadership of Ghulam Nabi Gilkar, Maulvi Abdullah Vakil, Mian Ahmad Yar and Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, "Azad Muslim Conference" established its platform in Jamia Masjid; and *Shoda Conference* decorated its stage at Naqashband Sahib. Both these parties were attacking and counter-attacking each other.

On Idd Day, January 14, 1934, State authorities asked Maulvi Hamadani not to deliver the sermon (*waiz*) at Ali

Masjid. The Muslims took it an insult and protested. Maulana Masoodi, Sadr-ud-Din Mujahid, Mohammad Maqbool Bebaqi, M.A. Sabir, Ghulam Mohinddin Indrabi and Ghulam Mustafa Masoodi were arrested on January 28, 1934; and expelled from the State for one year. Maulvi Hamadani was also arrested and externed to Lahore. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and Mir Ghulam Hasan Gilani were detained in Reasi Jail. Mohiuddin Zohra, Mohiuddin Kara and Mohammad Iqbal Capri were fined Rs. 1200 each. After the arrest of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, "Azad National Conference" accused him of misappropriating the public finances.

State people's movement started again and the "*dictators*" (volunteers) were offering arrests from Khanqah-e-Mualla. Mujahid Manzil was under construction those days. A meeting of All India Muslim Conference was held at Sialkot on February 10, 1934, in which it was decided to send "*dictators*" (volunteers) to Kashmir. But Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah turned down this offer. However, Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas came to Srinagar and delivered a speech at Khanqahe-Mualla. He was detained by the state authorities.

Maulana Masoodi and Sadr-ud-Din Mujahid entered Kashmir in the garb of *gujjars*. They remained under-ground for a sometime and then delivered a series of lectures at Khanqahmulla. Both of them were arrested in 1934. At this time, Sardar Gauhar Rahman arrived in Srinagar and opened a branch of All India Muslim Conference here.

All political prisoners were released and formation of State Assembly announced on the recommendation of Glancy Commission. Elections were held on September 4, 1934, and Muslim Conference got five seats. A convention of the Party was held at Sopore on November 11-13, 1934, and state government was asked to implement the Glancy Commission recommendations in full. After the convention was over, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah left for India and toured different parts of the country. He was introduced to Jawaharlal Nehru. Mutual close friendship and confidence developed between the

two leaders. After his return to Srinagar, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah appointed some non-Muslims as the members of of Muslim Conference. Prem Nath Bazaz was asked to issue newspaper *Hamdard.* Sardar Budh Singh, Lala Girdharilal Anand, D.P. Dhar, Kashinath Karihalloo, Sham Lal Saraf and J.N. Zutshi joined hands with the Shaikh and played a predominant role in the State Peoples, Movement against the Dogra autocratic rule. A convention of Muslim Conference was held at Mujahid Manzil on October 25-27, 1935, in which a number of non-Muslims also participated. A river procession was taken out with which Chowdhury Ghulam Abbas, Ghulam Nabi Gilkar, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and others associated themselves. Choudhury Ghulam Abbas was elected the President of the Party. Some Muslim, Hindu and Sikh youngmen also formed the "Youth League" in 1936. But neither Muslim Conference nor Youth League could prevent the communal clashes taking place in the Valley in June 1937, which were inspired and sponsored by the British imperialism.

Mohiuddin Kara founded the "Kashmir Mazdoor Sabha" in November 1937. "Mazdoor-Day" was observed in Kashmir on November 14, 1937; with which started the labour movement and functioning of labour parties in the State.

The 6th Annual Convention of Muslim Conference was held at Jammu from March 25-27, 1938. In this convention, a resolution was moved to change the name of Party from Muslim Conference to National Conference, so that non-Muslims could actively participate in its activities and also in the State People's Movement against the Dogra regime. It was also proposed to amend the constituation of the Party and adopt a new constitution by the name of "Naya Kashmir". But the resolution was opposed by Chowdhuary Ghulam Abbas, Abdul Majid Qureshi and Shaikh Ahmaddin Banahali, who later resigned from the Party.

A historical convention of Muslim Conference was held at Pather Masjid, Srinagar, from June 10-11, 1939, under the presidentship of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq. In this special

convention, Maulana Sayyid Masoodi again adopted the resolution for the change in the name of the Party; which was unanimously passed and the Party was renamed as "National Conference". Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was elected its President. Jialal Kilam and Kashyap Bandhu also joined the new Party, which consolidated its claim for secularism, socialism and nationalism.

3

Independence and Internment

National Conference, the regional political party, was ideologically affiliated to the Indian National Congress. Close ties between Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and the leaders of Indian National Movement elevated him to the then important office of President, All State Peoples' Movement. In fact, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was leading the Muslim predominated Kashmir along secular and not communal path, particularly at a time when the "Two Nation Theory" of Ali Mohammad Jinah was vitiating the political atmosphere in India. Muslim League, which was already forging the dream of Muslim State with the blessings of the British imperialism, made a number of secret and hectic attempts to win over the Shaikh to its ideology. Jinah personally visited Kashmir in 1945 for the same obvious purpose. However, none of these persuasions made the Shaikh to change his course since he believed in nationalism and secularism by conviction and not as a matter of expediency. While Indian National Congress passed through the phase of "Quit India" movement and the resultant incarceration of senior leaders like Gandhi and Nehru, and their subsequent release by the end of World War II, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah continued organizing and consolidating his Party, viz. the National Conference. In 1946,

sensing that India's freedom was round the corner, he raised the historic slogan of "Quit Kashmir".

Perplexed by the mass movement launched by the people of Kashmir, the Maharaja came down upon the movement with a heavy hand; arrested the Shaikh and his close associates. The Dogra ruler did not even hesitate to let loose a reign of terror to save his autocratic rule. This led to a bitter reaction by the people in India and Nehru came personally to plead the case of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. But he was not allowed to enter the Valley by the State authorities and arrested at the frontier town of Kohala. Gandhi also visited Kashmir and tried to resolve the tangle. But he was annoyed by the ruthless attitude of the ruling regiment that he declined to be the guest of the Maharaja.

The *Quit Kashmir* movement aiming at the ouster of the Dogra rule continued, when in 1947 India was partitioned and tha new state of Pakistan carved out of its skeleton by the communalist and imperialist forces. The partition was followed by large scale communal massacres. But during this carnage, Kashmir, under the dynamic and inspiring leadership of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, maintained communal harmony of the order that even Gandhi had to acknowledge it as something to be extolled. The national attitude of the people of Kashmir and their obvious indifference and hatred for two-nation theory embittered the rulers of Pakistan. In fact, the rulers of Pakistan had already included Kashmir in Pakistan map in their theoritical conception because of the Valley being predominantly Muslim.

It may be recalled that with the announcement of Independence on August 15, 1947, the State of Jammu and Kashmir signed a standstill Agreement with Pakistan. Even then Pakistan began to put undue stress on Kashmir to acceed to that country and created the tension in the region. The two main routes leading to Kashmir were sealed by Pakistan and the supply of essential commodities was stopped. But the

people of Kashmir were not ready to bow before the imperialist and colonialist designs of Pakistan. In utter frustration and confusion, Pakistan let loose the barbarious bands of tribesmen, the *Qabailis*, assisted by Pakistan regular army, to invade and plunder the Valley of Kashmir in October, 1947. The bandits and highwaymen were not only provided the moral support by Pakistan. but were also supplied transport, arms and other necessary materials. They invaded Kashmir, burnt houses, looted people, raped and abducted women. They indulged in indiscriminate plunder and massacre, sparing neither Hindus nor Muslims, and threatened the gates of Srinagar. This compelled the Government of Jammu and Kashmir State to approach the Indian Government for immediate military assistance. Since a legal basis had first to be established, the Instrument of Accession to the Indian Union was signed. Indian troops were sent to repulse the invaders, help the people of Kashmir and rescue them from the clutches of Pakistani bandits. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was released from jail and placed at the head of the Emergency Administration. Indian forces were able to check the advance of the invaders and push them back. The people of Kashmir also resolved to safeguard their motherland at all costs against the ravages of the raiders.

The Government of India referred the Kashmir problem to the Security Council on January 1, 1948. The Security Council's Commission arrived in Delhi on July 10, 1948. After discussing the problem with the Indian authorities, the Commission proceeded to Karachi on July 31, 1948. As a result of mediation by the Commission, the two countries agreed to a cease-fire on January 1, 1949. It was also agreed that hostilities between the two countries were not to be resumed till the final settlement by the Commission. The proposal for holding a free and impartial plebiscite was issued on January 6, 1949.

During the developments of 1948, National Conference acted without taking the majority of people into confidence. Even the party workers were reduced to informers rather than

political activists, which inflicted damage to their own credibility. In fact, British imperialism was not only responsible for the division of India, but also for the Kashmir problem. The Anglo—U.S. faction in the Security Council saw Kashmir only as the neighbour of Soviet Russia and a good springboard for anti-communist propaganda. But once the Indian army entered Kashmir, the Government of India and the State administration forgot all about the Anglo-Soviet rivalry in the region. They became complacent about the entry of a new, more powerful, factor in the geopolitics of the region. The British colonialism was being gradually replaced by the American imperialism. The Shaikh administration agonized itself less for the peoples' movement—their emotions and aspirations. The people of Kashmir were bruised by the posture of their leaders. With the result, efforts of the Security Council's Commission proved only futile. Dixon was then sent as mediator to settle the Kashmir issue. He studied the problem and discussed it with the authorities of India and Pakistan. But his efforts, too, failed to yield positive results.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah had very powerful grip over the people of Kashmir. Even those who wanted to acceed to Pakistan were dominated by his towering personality. He was considered as the seviour of the poor; one who persistently fought against an autocratic rule which took him to jail several times. His integrity and honesty were never questioned. But it was in 1950 that conspiracies were hatched to replace the Shaikh as leader of National Conference by his rivals, who got inspiration from New Delhi. It was under the Naya Kashmir programme, which epitomised the future policies and programmes of the new popular government of National Conference, that the big landlords were deprived of their vast estates. Thus the Shaikh incurred their animosity and they worked against him. In this these landlords were supported by some elements who liked to see Shaikh's ouster. But this made him a dominating, ruthless politician and a benevolent national leader.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was personally satisfied with the accession of Kashmir to the Republic of India. He had considerable faith in the Indian leadership, particularly Nehru. But in spite of all friendship for India, his first loyalty was to Kashmir. In his inaugural speech before the newly elected Constituent Assembly on November 5, 1951, the Shaikh said : "………During the last four years, the Government of India has never tried to interfere in our internal autonomy. This experience has strengthened our confidence in them as a democratic set up..." About the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan he said : "...The claim of Pakistan being a Muslim state is only a camouflage……to dupe the common man so that he may not see clearly that Pakistan is a feudal state in which a clique is trying by these methods to maintain itself in power...appeal to religion constitutes a sentimental and a wrong approach...sentiments often lead to irrational actions." Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah again said on March 23, 1952 : "...Suppose for the sake of argument that the people do not ratify the accession with India. The position that would follow will not be that Kashmir becomes a part of Pakistan. No ! that would not happen legally and constitutionally. What would happen in such a case would be that the state would again regain the status which it enjoyed immediately preceding the accession. Let us be clear about it." These were the words and ideas of the Shaikh about Kashmir and its accession to India. Some people wanted the partition of State through a plebiscite to decide the Kashmir problem once for all. But Shaikh stood for integrity, probity and rectitude of the Jammu and Kashmir State.

The question of Kashmir's final accession was to be decided through plebiscite. India never wanted Kashmir to become another Korea. Nehru declared in 1951 that he would like to offer Kashmir to Pakistan on a silver plate rather than have an independent Kashmir on his borders. In fact, the Indian authorities sensed the Anglo-U.S. imperlalist and designs to create independent Kashmir, where the imperialist and colonial creatures could thrive. An independent Kashmir

would also have served as the springboard for the imperialists to perpetrate their ravages, menace, peace and stability in Central Asia and India.

By virtue of Delhi Agreement, signed between the Shaikh as the Head of the State administration and the Central Government on July 24, 1952, monarchy was abolished in the State. A separate flag, in addition to the national flag, was accepted for the State. The jurisdiction of the powers of the President of India were extended to the State. The people of the State were also granted the Indian citizenship rights.

In May 1953, reports came that the Shaikh was contriving to enter into relations with Washington on his own and wanted an independent status for Kashmir as an alternative solution to the problem, He even moved a resolution in the Working Committee of National Conference for an independent Kashmir. Probably in this new thinking, he was inspired and encouraged by Washington. His attitude put the Indian authorities on the horns of dilemma; and in a state of frustration they decided to dismiss the Shaikh as Premier.

On August 9, 1953, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was dismissed by a proclamation from the Sadr-e-Riyasat, and was arrested. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, the second in power hierarchy, assumed the office of State Prime Minister under the patronage and inspirations of New Delhi.

The policy makers at New Delhi could not foresee the implications of a decision devoid of prudence and high statesmanship. They could not realize that Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah has proved himself as the saviour of the majority of people of Kashmir; who neither favoured India nor Pakistan but only the Shaikh. His arrest could not have been the only solution to the problem. The ill-advised, inconsiderate and hasty decision taken by New Delhi in 1953 gave rise to political chaos, confusion, disarray, militancy, terrorism and separatism in the Valley even after more than forty years of gradual economic development.

4

Political Crisis

The change over of 1953 divided the National Conference into two camps. One camp stuck to the Party and approved the deposition of the Shaikh, while the other continued its allegience to him. Mirza Afazl Beg, the Revenue Minister in the Shaikh ministry, was also arrested upon the change over and was released in November 1954. With his release, pro-Shaikh activists were galvanized into action. This was significantly the outcome of the efforts of Afzal Beg that pro-Shaikh elements got the inspiration and encouragement to work for the cause set before them by Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. Afzal Beg also developed contacts with other opposition parties like Political Conference, etc.

Ghulam Mohiuddin Kara was initially a nationalist, functioning as the District President of National Conference before 1948. But with the assumption of office by National Conference, he turned a leftist as he did not feature in the first Shaikh ministry. Gradually he distanced himself from the National Conference and developed contacts with different parties including subversive, fundamentalist and pro-Pak elements with a view to undermine the government. However, he did not advocate the pro-Pak ideology openly. According

to some reports, he associated himself with the agents of Muslim League and evinced keen interest in the cause of Pakistan. He also developed relations with the reactionary and imperialist agents for acts of sabotage in the Valley to gain a name for himself. With the help of disgruntled elements, Mohiuddin Kara decided to form a limited front to overthrow the Shaikh government and create the atmosphere for plebiscite in Kashmir. But his efforts harvested no fruit. Taking the advantage of dissensions in the ranks of National Conference in 1953, he announced the formation of his Party—the Kashmir Political Conference, with himself as its founder-President.

Kashmir Political Conference advocated the accession of Kashmir to Pakistan, immediate withdrawal of Indian troops from the territories of State of Jammu and Kashmir, holding of a plebiscite in the State, granting of freedom to press and platform, restoration of civil rights and the release of political prisoners.

On June 19, 1953, Mohiuddin Kara made an anti-India and anti-government public speech at Sehyar (Alikadal). A few thousand people were collected there to listen his adverse and antagonist sentiments. Deceived by the big audience, Mohiuddin Kara raised the slogan of "Pakistan Only" and demanded the immediate withdrawal of Indian troops from Kashmir. This resulted in his arrest. During 1954, the activities of Kashmir Political Conference were confined to the collection of funds for the Party and the distribution of anti-government cyclostyled posters. The Party also developed close relations with pro-Shaikh elements.

With the release of Mohiuddin Kara in December 1954, Kashmir Political Conference regained its momentum. To consolidate his position and also to find a springboard for his activities, Afzal Beg developed close ties with Mohiuddin Kara. But the fear of being dominated by Political Conference and Mohiuddin Kara, forced Afzal Beg to develop contacts with other parties as well.

The relations between Sanatan Dharm Yuvak Sabha and Shaikh administration were no better till 1953. During the primeministership of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, the relations between the Sabha and the ruling National Conference started improving. After some time, Sabha merged itself politically with the ruling National Conference and continued to function as social organization under the new name, "All State Kashmiri Pandits' Conference (Yuvak Sabha)". But the merger of the Sabha politically with the National Conference was disliked by most of the Kashmiri Pandit youngmen, who, under the leadership of Dr. S.N. Peshin tried to replace Shiv Narayan Fotedar as the President of the Sabha. But having failed in this move, these youngmen formed a parallel Sabha with headquarters at Shivala Temple (Karan Nagar) and started the publication of a paper, *Nav Jeevan*, as its official organ.

Meanwhile, Mirza Afzal Beg was busy to play up extensively the pro-Shaikh sentiments in the Valley. He formed a small rival group in State Assembly, called the Democratic Socialist Group, with himself as its leader. But he failed to establish any effective opposition in the Assembly and proceeded to Delhi to consult his supporters like Mridulla Sarabhai and Maulvi Syed. On his return to Srinagar, Afzal Beg renewed his contacts with other parties. On June 14, 1955, he delivered a public speech at Anantnag with a clear pro-Pak slant. This gave some boost to his activities which were accelerated with the passage of time. He also developed contacts with the agents of Pakistan, and, according to some unconfirmed reports, he also received financial assistance and an offer of arms supply from them.

In 1941, Jamaat-i-Islami was founded by Abu Ala Maudoodi, with its headquarters at Lahore. After the partition of country, the Jamaat in India was separated from the parent body. The Jamaat in Pakistan had been taking an active part in the cry of *Jehad* (Holy War), which has been raised from time to time in Pakistan for the annexation of Kashmir by that country.

The Jamaat in India with headquarters at Rampur, maintained close contacts with its counterpart in Pakistan. The affiliations of this Party were also dociled to the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt and Masjoomi Party of Indonesia. The Party, though ostensibly propagating the Islamic view of life based on *Shariat*, was based on the Two-Nation Theory. Its publications carried on extensive anti-India and anti-Hindu propaganda. According to the ideology of the Party, it is a sin for the Muslims to live under a government dominated by *Kafirs*.

A branch of the Jamaat-i-Islami was established in Kashmir in 1940's with Pir Said-ud-Din as its President. Its constitution for Kashmir unit was printed in November 1953. In the beginning, the Jamaat confined its activities to dissemination of Party literature, propagation of Islamic teachings and establishing the *Dar-ul-Mutalaas* (Reading Rooms). *Maktabs* (schools) were also set up in large numbers throughout the State for the propagation of the fundamentals of Islamic teachings. The aim of this Party in Kashmir was to struggle for attaining Islamic way of life. The local leaders of the Party have not distanced themselves from local politics.

This state of affairs continued till August 9, 1955, when the formation of the "Plebiscite Front" was formally announced by Afzal Beg with himself as its founder-President and Ghulam Mohiuddin Hamadani as its General Secretary. With the emergence of this Organization, Kashmir Political Conference lost its previous importance and its activities remained confined to anti-government propaganda. In spite of clever manoeuvrings on the part of Mohiuddin Kara to win over the Leaguers by advocating openly pro-Pak stand, the Party could not find its expansion possible.

Plebiscite Front was anti-Indian in character, and enjoyed the unconditional support and inspiration of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. It was formed with the following aims and objectives :

1. To demand the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir;
2. To settle the Kashmir issue by a free and fair plebiscite in the State;
3. To oppose the State and Central administration and make them unpopular among the people;
4. To popularize plebiscite slogan and demand for the withdrawal of Indian troops.

The Plebiscite Front leaders approved structuring the Front on the organizational pattern of National Conference so that it could be an effective parallel to that Party. After sometime, the Front decided to raise a volunteer crops on regular payment basis. This was followed by the detention of Ghulam Mohammad Shah and others on February 4, 1956. On February 8, 1956, rumours were set afloat that the Shaikh had been released. The Front fanned the rumour to manipulate an upsurge against the government. But the people remained indifferent and this endeavour of Front leaders failed. However, it resulted in the detention of the then Front President, Sofi Mohammad Akbar. Consequently, Ali Shah took over as the President of the Organization.

By this time, the activities of Mohiuddin Kara almost disappeared. Earlier in 1955, printed forms were distributed among the workers of Kashmir Political Conference to know whether the signatories wanted a plebiscite or not, and whether they wanted accession to India or Pakistan. But this question from campaign of the party also met with failure. In August 1955, Mohiuddin Kara was arrested which spelt collapse for his Party. It is believed that the Plebiscite Front was instrumental in causing the failure and collapse of Kashmir Political Conference.

When Plebiscite Front felt the need of accelerating the tempo of its movement, it induced Begum Abdullah to take an active part in its programme. In this way a women wing of the

Front came into existence with the aim of consolidating the parent Organization. After sometime, the women wing merged into the Organisation.

In 1956, on the occasion of Idd, the Front directed its workers to collect the *Zakat* and *Qurban* skins to afford relief to the survivors of the martyrs. Ali Shah was detained when he attempted at fomenting trouble and disturbing peace in Bhadarwah. Mohammad Ishaq took over as the Acting President of the Organisation.

The Front held indoor meetings regularly at Srinagar. Efforts were made to hold the party conventions in the towns of Sopore and Anantnag, but it did not materialise. The leaders of the Front, however, undertook frequent tours to raise the morale of their workers and diffuse anti-India sentiments. The Organization also arranged to stage a demonstration against Jawaharlal Nehru by waving black flags against him during his visit to the Valley in September, 1957.

Ali Mohammad Naiku was elected as the 4th Acting President of the Front during 1957. The Central Office of the Party and other branch offices in the districts continued their efforts to set up a net work of offices in every village and enlist members. The purpose was to get the mass involvement for the anti-India and anti-government activities of the Organization.

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad continued to be the State Prime Minister with the good wishes of New Delhi and with the support of that group of National Conference partymen which had stood by him in 1953. However, a faction led by Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq separated from it in 1957 as dissidents and set up a separate Organization, the Democratic National Conference.

Plebiscite Front was formed on the preamble that Kashmir was a disputed territory and its accession to India

was only temporary. It strongly advocated the holding of a plebiscite in the State to determine the will of the People as per the Security Council Resolutions of 1948 and 1949. Elements who were not happy with Kashmir's accession to India in 1947, and those who were sore at the toppling of the Shaikh government in 1953, rallied under this separatist Party. The Front became popular in the Valley of Kashmir and also in district Doda of Jammu Province. In their public speeches, the Front leaders were highly critical of all government actions in general and ruling National Conference activities in particular. On July 13, 1957, the day which was being celebrated by National Conference as Martyrs' Day, the Plebiscite Front workers announced their intention of taking out a procession in Anantnag. But their efforts were frustrated when permission was refused to them by the district administration.

The Front leaders maintained contacts with Pakistan through underground channels and were believed to be receiving large sums of money, most of which they misappropriated and distributed the rest among Party workers as their pay and allowances. When Pakistan started sending to Kashmir saboteurs and fifth columnists with bombs and explosives, some prominent Front leaders were found directly involved in cases of subversion. Mohiuddin Zargar, Acting President of Front, was detained for his anti-national activities on August 6, 1957.

The Plebiscite Front issued typed out *khabarnama* (News Bulletin) every week in which details of the Party activities were published. These bulletins were distributed in indoor meetings of the Organization.

The activities of the Front were almost insignificant till the release of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah in January 1958. With his release the Front iniensified its activities. The Shaikh supported the separatist slogans of the Front and exhorted its workers to keep themselves ready for sacrifices, raise *Ansars* (volunteers) and contribute funds. His speeches preached violence and even aimed at fomenting communal trouble.

These *Ansars* (volunteers), under the patronage of the Shaikh, were directly responsible for attacks made on the rally of the National Conference near Hazratbal resulting in the death of Mohiuddin Banday. As a result, of his prejudicial activities, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was again detained under the *Kashmir Conspiracy Case* after three months.

Plebiscite Front inspired and encouraged the Kashmir liberation movement launched by Chowdhary Ghulam Abbas in Pak-occupired Kashmir. The Front made the Muslims believe that this movement had brightened up prospects of a plebiscite in the State and the resultant accession of Kashmir to Pakistan. But this movement met with its untimely death, particularly after the re-arrest of the Shaikh under the *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*, which, according to the pro-Shaikh sources, was hatched by the Bakshi administration under the patronage of New Delhi.

After the arrest of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, the workers of the Front focussed on collection of funds for the defence of the accused under the *Conspiracy Case*. The campaign for collection of funds was extended beyond Srinagar city to districts and villages. Begum Abdullah set up a Defence Committee with whom these funds were deposited. Appeals were also made by her to prominent businessmen and traders in the Valley, calling upon them to make liberal donations towards the Sher-i-Kashmir Relief Fund.

By this time, the Jamaat-i-Islami intensified its activities in Kashmir. The basic aim of this Party was to propagate the Islamic way of life and system of government. According to the ideology of Jamaat, religion and politics go together hand in hand, and the materialistic approach to life as envisaged in the concepts of secularism and socialism would bring about only ruination to the humanity. However, the Party never believed in bringing about a revolution by violent means or by resorting to subversive activities.The Jamaat held the view that Kashmir question was still unresolved and the territory was a disputed one. As a result of this, conditions of uncertainty

prevailed in the State. No doubt, the Party contested the State Assembly elections a number of times and took the oath of loyalty to the Indian Constitution inside the Assembly. But outside the Assembly complex, this Party exploited the religious sentiments of the majority of people for its political interests.

Indian National Congress was founded by A.O. Hume, an Englishman, in 1885. Its first session was held in Bombay in the same year under the presidentship of W.C. Bannerji. There have been European presidents for its various sessions. In the beginning, the Congress was under the control of the moderates. With the passage of time, Congress felt that the Indians should be given a share in the administration of the country. In 1909, Minto-Morley Reforms were introduced. The Indians got non-official majority in the Assemblies. When World War I came to an end, Congress demanded greater share for Indians in the administration of the country. But instead of getting greater share, Indians got the Rowlatt Bill. There was the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy and martial law. At this time, Gandhiji launched Satyagraha, which was followed by Non-cooperation Movement in 1920. In 1928, the annual session of Indian National Congress was held at Calcutta in which Dominion Status was resolved to be the demand of a vast majority. But it was not conceded by Simon Commission. In the Lahore annual session of 1929, Congress decided to agree to nothing short of complete independence. There was salt-Satyagraha and the result was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. In 1935, Communal Award was granted by the British imperialists with the result that many Muslims decided to leave Indian National Congress. There also occurred a split in the Congress itself and the faction of militants led by Subhash Chander Bose formed the Forward Block. The struggle for India's freedom was carried on with intensified vigour.

When, during World War II, the Japanese occupied Burma and Malaya, the Indians living there did not know which side to support. They resented the treatment of the

British, but the Japanese were no better. Left with no alternative, they launched a movement for the liberation of India and formed the Indian National Army under Captain Mohan Singh in September, 1942. But for various reasons the movement could not become a force to be reckoned with. In July 1943, Subhash Chander Bose arrived in Singapore and revitalised the Indian National Army under his own leadership. Besides the contingents of regular troops, a regiment of women soldiers by the name Rani Jhansi Regiment and Bal Savadals (boy scouts) were also raised. Tricolour was their flag. Indian Notional Army expressed its willingness to receive assistance from Japan, but refused to accept her supremacy. When the number of the soldiers in Indian National Army touched 50,000, it marched towards India and fought bravely on several fronts. When Japan was defeated in 1945, most of Indian National Army personnel were taken as prisoners by the British. Three of their leaders were tried by court martial in Red Fort. They were charged with murder and waging of war. The Indian National Congress took up their sacred cause. A Defence Counsel composed of some eminent Indian lawyers was set up and a fund was raised. Popular feelings ran so high throughout India that processions and meetings were held defying police orders. The court found all the three guilty and sentenced them to death. However, the sentence was remitted later on.

After the end of World War II, the British declared the inception of an interim government for India in 1946. Nehru became its President. On June 3, 1947, the partition of India was proposed. On August 15, 1947, India was divided into two dominions—India and Pakistan. The masterly game of British imperialism in the subcontinent had been played. India became a sovereign country, and the Indian National Congress assumed power in the Centre. But this Party had no branch in the State of Jammu and Kashmir and therefore could not establish itself till 1963.

It was during the Indian National Movement that Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah developed close association with the

leaders of Indian National Congress. After the sensational change in Kashmir administration in August 1953, when the Shaikh was removed from power, some pro-Indian elements in the State sincerely believed that pro-India forces in the State ought to be strengthened. A branch of the Indian National Congress was established in Srinagar by Mohammad Shafi Qureshi on September 5, 1963, when the ruling National Conference was faced with serious internal dissensions. At this stage the activities of State Congress Committee remained confined only to the holding of meetings and collection of funds. In 1964, when Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq took over as the Chief Minister of the Jammu and Kashmir State, the activities of the Party were revived. However, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad retained the National Conference as an organisation till 1972. It was on April Ist, 1972, that the Working Committee of the National Conference decided to merge their Party with the Congress. The decision was put before the General Council of the Party, which approved the decision of the Working Committee on April 12, 1972. On April 13, 1972, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad announced in a press conference that the National Conference has been merged with the State Congress Party.

Towards the closing days of 1963, an episode of far reaching consequences occurred in the Valley. The Sacred Relic was lifted from Hazratbal Shrine (Srinagar) on December 27, 1963. Maulvi Farooq went there and delivered a speech. On this occasion he was introduced to Dr. Farooq Abdullah, son of the Shaikh, who had also gone there to deliver a speech. On December 28, 1963, Maulvi Farooq delivered a speech at Lal Chowk where he got introduced with Mohiuddin Kara and Sadruddin Mujahid, a Plebiscite Front leader. Subsequently, Maulvi Farooq delivered a number of speeches in different parts of Srinagar and got introduced to almost all political leaders of the Valley. On December 29. 1963, he organized a meeting of the Muslim religious leaders of Srinagar in which it was decided that there should be a combined and organized effort for the recovery of the Holy Relic. It was also decided

to form a "Holy Relic Action Committee", with Maulvi Farooq as its President. On January 4, 1964, the Holy Relic was recovered and the Committee demanded that the same be identified. The members of the Action Committee having satisfied themselves permitted that the same be shown to the public at Hazratbal.

Maulvi Farooq visited Jammu on February 29, 1964, alongwith Maulana Masoodi and stayed there with Mubarak Shah of Baramulla. At Jammu, he had several meetings with Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg in the special jail, and discussed with them in detail the political situation in the Valley after the disappearance of the Holy Relic. He also delivered a speech at Parade Ground, Jammu, in which he demanded that the Shaikh, P.N. Dogra, Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah and other leaders of the State should sit together to discuss the Kashmir problem. After a three day stay at Jammu, Maulvi Farooq alongwith Maulana Masoodi, left for Pathankot, where he was introduced to Mirdulla Sarabhai—whose entry into the Sate was banned at that time.

At Jammu, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah told Maulvi Farooq that since the Holy Relic had been recovered and identified, there was no need of continuing the Holy Relic Action Committee, it should now take up the role of a political party and demand plebiscite in Kashmir. He was also assured by the Shaikh of his unconditional support and cooperation. Maulvi Farooq also agreed to work under the guidance and supervision of Ghulam Rasool Kochak and Ghulam Ahmad Ashai.

After his return to Srinagar, Maulvi Farooq called a meeting of the members of the Holy Relic Action Committee at his residence on March 15, 1964, in which Ghulam Ahmad Ashai was also invited and requested to prepare a political resolution regarding the conversion of Holy Relic Action Committee into a political organization to demand the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir, free plebiscite to

decide the accession of the State and immediate withdrawal of the Indian troops. On March 17, 1964, a public meeting was organized and Maulvi Farooq, as President of the Holy Relic Action Committee, read out the resolution to the audience. Holy Relic Action Committee was converted into a political body and renamed as "Action Committee". In this way, another dissident party to the accession of the State with India was born under the patronage and inspiration of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah.

Maulvi Farooq, as Chairman of the Action Committee, arranged a reception for Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and Mirza Afzal Beg when they were released from detention by the State government in April 1964, after the withdrawal of the *Kashmir Ccnspiracy Case* against them. He also presented to the Shaikh a purse of Rs. 2 lakh from the Action Committee. After that he held a number of discussions with Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and Afzal Beg.

Perplexed by the growing popularity of Maulvi Farooq and his Party, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah and Afzal Beg declared in a religio-political public meeting at Hazratbal that Acti›n Committee was only a religious organization and had absolutely nothing to do with politics. In their opinion, Plebiscite Front was the only political party of the State. Everybody knows that Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah himself always exploited religious platform for furthering his political interests. This naturally perplexed Maulvi Farooq, and on June 21, 1964, he declared the formation of a new party, Awami Action Committee, with the aim of obtaining the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir. He himself became its founder-President.

After the formation of Awami Action Committee, Maulvi Farooq developed differences with the Shaikh. The old *Sher-Bakra* rivalry was revived and violent clashes took place between the supporters of the Shaikh and of Maulvi Farooq. Shaikh Ghulam Mohiuddin Pandit, a relation of Maulvi

Farooq, came to Srinagar from Pakistan in December 1964 and tried to wash away the Shaikh-Maulvi rivalry. The differences between two leaders were subsequently resolved by Maulana Masoodi, if not permanently atleast for sometime.

To consolidate the foundations of his Party, Maulvi Farooq was in need of financial assistance and for this purpose he wrote to his uncle Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah in Pakistan. According to some reports, Mirwaiz arranged the same through Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi. During the Pak infiltration in August 1965, Maulvi Farooq also was reported of having established close contacts with the infiltrators. He was arrested for his prejudicial activities on October 9, 1965; and subsequently released on December 27, 1967.

After his release from detention, Maulvi Farooq did not take any active interest in politics for sometime. He veered to the Plebiscite Front and even acknowledged the leadership of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah in public meeting. But soon the supporters of Maulvi Farooq were disillusioned by the tactics adopted by the Plebiscite Front that it was the only Party in the State representing the aspirations of the people. This created resentment in Awami Action Committee and Maulvi Farooq was compelled not to tow the line of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah. Maulvi Farooq accordingly renewed his presidentship of Awami Action Committee, arranged public meetings and delivered speeches to build mass contacts. He demanded that Kashmir should be granted the right of self-determination to decide through a plebiscite whether it wanted to go to India or Pakistan. He also refuted the contention of the Shaikh that Plebiscite Front was the only party in the state. This irritated the Shaikh because he sensed a threat to his undisputed leadership. However, for sometime both leaders joined hands with each other to give a fight to the State Congress and the Kashmiri Pandits.

In 1967, during Kashmiri Pandit Agitation over kidnapping and conversion of a Hindu girl to Islam, the Hindu

Action Committee replaced the Yovak Sabha and worked as the representative of the Kashmiri Pandits. It was the period when Bhartiya Jana Sangh also tried to penetrate into the Kashmir politics and consolidate its foundations here. But after the Agitation was over, Jana Sangh reverted back to its original position, which was very week.

During the Pandit Agitation, Plebiscite Front and Awami Action Committee played a very hostile role against the Kashmiri Pandits. These parties held the anti-Hindu demonstrations and attacked the life and property of Kashmiri Pandits. This action on the part of Plebiscite Front and Awami Action Committee had its repercussions in Jammu, where Muslim property was damaged. The responsibility for the communal clashes of 1967 in the State, therefore, lies with the reactionary and separatist policies of Plebiscite Front and Awami Action Committee.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was detained in 1965 for his anti-India activities during his Hajj pilgrimage and visit to Alegeria where he contrived a meeting with the Chinese Premier, Chou-en-Lai. He was released on December 8, 1967, and soon after his release he toured the length and breadth of the Valley for about a year to revive the Plebiscite Front and foment anti-India sentiments among the Muslims of Kashmir.

In June 1968, reports were received that the Shaikh intended to convene a Jammu and Kashmir State Peoples' Convention for purposes of ascertaining concensus of opinion regarding a solution of the Kashmir problem. He held discussions with Maulana Masoodi, P.N. Bazaz, Mohiuddin Kara, Afzal Beg and Shamim Ahmad Shamim. Consequently a Steering Committee consisting of the following members was formed to implement the idea of holding the proposed Convention :

1. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah (Chairman);
2. Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah (Secretary);

3. P.N. Bazaz (Convenor);
4. Maulana Masoodi (Member);
5. Shamim Ahmad Shamim (Member);
6. Ghulam Mohiuddin Kara (Member);
7. Sant Singh Tegh (Member);
8. Balraj Puri (Member);
9. Maulvi Farooq (Member);
10. Moti Lal Misra (Member);
11. M.A. Shahmiri (Member);
12. Afzal Beg (Member).

The Steering Committee requested various political parties to register their delegates for the proposed Convention, and submit the copies of papers they would like to read. Invitations were also sent to some prominent persons interested in Kashmir affairs and living in Pak-occupied Kashmir and other places. Jaya Prakash Narayan, prominent nationalist leader, was invited to inaugurate the Convention. The initial date for holding the Convention was fixed for September 29, 1968; but the same was postponed to October 10, 1968, because of Gandhi Jayanti celebrations.

Jaya Prakash Narayan arrived in Srinagar on October 10 and was received at the airport by the members of the Steering Committee. He was then brought in a procession to Mujahid Manzil—Headquarter of Plebiscite Front, where he inaugurated the Convention. In his inaugural address, Jaya Prakash Narayan said that a settlement with the Indian government within the Constitution be arrived at as in his conviction Pakistan had ceased to be party to the Kashmir issue after the Indo-Pak conflict of 1965.

Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah directed the proceedings of the Convention to take place in camera as delicate matters were to be discnssed. However, he declared that the people

would be informed when a decision was arrived at and nothing would be decided against their wishes. The Shaikh announced that the Convention was neither anti-India nor anti-Pakistan in character; and that India and Pakistan were holding their interests supreme unmindful of the interests of the people of Kashmir. He asked the majority community to win the confidence of the minorities. At the same time Shaikh used the platform to warn the minorities that the army and police could not defend them unless they were in the good books of majority community.

On October 11, 1968, the proceedings of the Convention started with Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah explaining briefly its purpose. Ghulam Mohiuddin Shah Secretary of the Steering Committee, read out the letters from various prominent personalities wishing the Convention a success. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah read out his opening address and had the booklet, *Kashmir, India and Pakistan*, circulated among the delegates. P.N. Bazaz read out his paper, *Kashmir : Challenge and Response*. During the second session on that day, papers were also read out by M.A. Shahmiri, Maulvi Abbas Ansari, Mufti Rashid-ud-Din and Shamlal Yach. In the evening, a public meeting was convened at Hazuri Bagh wherein Jaya Prakash Narayan repeated the idea which he had earlier expressed in his inaugural address of the Convention. To this Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah reacted sharply and said that it was not necessary for the people of Kashmir to agree with the views of Jaya Prakash Narayan. He announced that the people of Kashmir were only concerned with the attainment of the right of self-determination, unmindful of the repercussions it might have on Government of India. He also declared that the freedom "is not offered as a gift, but is to be wrested".

During the entire course of the Convention, October 11-17, 1968, papers were read out or speeches delivered by the delegates. About 78 speakers spoke in all. Fifty-four of them read out written papers while oral speeches were delivered by

twenty-four speakers. These speeches were tape-recorded by the organisers of the Convention.

In the convention, about forty delegates spoke in favour of holding a plebiscite in Kashmir. Eighteen delegates advocated continuance of accession to India, while twelve stood for independence of the State and six suggested U.N. supervision. Only two delegates supported accession of the State with the Pakistan. In the concluding session on October 17, 1968 the following resolutions were passed :

1. The Convention instructs the Steering Committee to properly classify the presented material for submission to and discussions in the next convention as early as possible in order to have a way for finding a peaceful, democratic, just and realistic solution to the issue.

2. The Convention felt it necessary that Kashmiri leaders and thinkers from across the cease-fire line (Pak-occupied-Kashmir) be invited to the next convention and hope that the Government of India would facilitate their journey.

On the conclusion of the Convention, members of the Steering Committee pronounced it a success in view of the ideas expressed therein by the delegates. The Plebiscite Front workers also believed that the Convention would bear fruit at least by way of breaking ice for talks between the Shaikh and New Delhi. Some people even believed that the Convention was a "power-show" by the Shaikh to compel the government of India to arrive at some political setllement with him. However, the Convention made the leaders and people of Kashmir conscious that any solution to the problem was to be found within the framework of Indian Constitution.

The Steering Committee of the State Peoples' Convention met again at Mujahid Manzil from May 12-14, 1969, in which the agenda regarding broad outlines and character of internal

constitutional set-up of the State was discussed. It was resolved that the constitution of the State should be so framed as to ensure widest possible decentralization of power among its various constituents without jeopardising the integrity of the State. It was decided that the State should have a prototype constitution for the State, Unit, Zone, Block and Local self-governing bodies. A sub-committee comprising following office-bearers was set up to constitute the draft of the constitution on the above guidelines :

1. Mirza Afzal Beg (Chairman);
2. G.M. Shah (Convenor);
3. G.M. Kara (Member);
4. Balraj Puri (Member);
5. M.L. Misri (Member).

After the death of Mirwaiz Yousuf Shah at Rawalpindi, Maulvi Farooq was installed as *Mirwaiz Kashmir* on December 20, 1968. He and his Party boycotted the Gajendragadkar Commission and continued the claim of self-determination for the people of Kashmir. In September, 1970, the Awami Action Committee got split up into two groups. A separate party, Muslim Conference, was formed by Mohammad Abdullah Rather. In May 1972, Awami Action Committee had another rupture when New Awami Action Committee was formed by Ghulam Mohammad Khan Salar, who also levelled charges of misappropriation and corruption against Maulvi Farooq.

The State Congress ever since its inception in 1963 has passed through spells of stress and turmoil. It was bedeviled by internal dissensions and got divided into two camps in 1971 —one led by Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, the Chief Minister; and the other by Sayyid Mir Qasim, State Party Chief. It was the result of these internal dissensions that Mir Qasim had to resign as Party Chief. Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, on analysing the causes that led to the weakening of the State Congress,

submitted a proposal to new Delhi for bringing the Shaikh back into the national mainstream. He was of the opinion that by agreeing to the proposal such obstacles as hindered strengthening of pro-Indian forces in the State, would be removed and the State would be put on the path to smooth progress. This idea, however, did not materialise because of Sadiq's death with which power passed into the hands of Sayyid Mir Qasim. The difficult process for bringing the Shaikh back to power in 1975 was undertaken by Mirza Afzal Beg and G. Parthasarthy, but the original idea was of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq.

Maulvi Farooq, who considered the accession of Kashmir with India as temporary and disputed one, demanded a triangular "Round Table Conference" between Pakistan, India and Kashmir in 1973 to settle the issue. He also advocated for developing close ties between the Muslims of the Valley and outside State to preserve the Islamic religion, culture and heritage in Kashmir.

The Pandits of Kashmir, a very small religious minority in the Valley, suffered the maximum after Independence and the accession of the State to India. The community served as the scape-goat for Indian secularism and socialism in Kashmir. Even Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, who managed the accession of Kashmir with India against the wishes of majority of people, had no qualms of conscience in branding the Kashmiri Pandits as Indian spies. He played the pivotal role in disintegrating and uprooting the community. They were suppressed politically and economically, and were discriminated against on the basis of religion. Unable to withstand these pressures and tormented by the feeling that they were scape-goats to a pretentious secularism both by the State and the Central ruling Parties, the Pandits wave after wave left their native land and got scattered over the plains of India in search of means of subsistence. The community which had upheld its ancient identity, culture and tradition with great fortitude during centuries of political vicissitudes, was brought to the brink of extinction under Peoples' government.

Plebiscite Front contested the Panchayat Elections in 1970-71, and claimed spectacular success. The Party also became interested in contesting the State Assembly election. But on January 12, 1971, the Front was declared unlawful and chances for its contesting the elections were precluded. On the other hand, Mir Qasim could not succeed in removing factionalism within the State Congress, nor could he arrive at any agreement with the Sadiq group. During the Assembly Elections of 1972, hostility between the two rival groups within the Congress deepened to such an extent that the Qasim group engineered the defeat of Sadiq group candidates in the elections, even though the latter were contesting on Congress mandate. The Sadiq group thereupon held the ruling group responsible for its humilitation and came out in open revolt. The Qasim group retaliated by expelling their rivals from the organizational posts and even from the Party itself. Attempts by New Delhi at bringing about rapproachement between the rival groups also proved futile. Alarmed by the deepening crisis in the State branch of Congress Party and the possible damaging consequences of the continuing strife and in-fighting, New Delhi moved to implement Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq's idea of an amicable settlement with the Shaikh.

On February 2, 1972, Mirza Afzal Beg, while in Delhi, made a dramatic announcement that the Plebiscite Front and its leaders had no differences with New Delhi over the question of accession, which was final and irrevocable. The differences, if any, pertained only to internal autonomy.

The ban on Plebiscite Front was lifted on January 11, 1973. Consequent upon this, talks for a rapproachement between the Shaikh and New Delhi were initiated. Parthasarthy represented the Centre while Afzal Beg acted as his counterpart. These talks were concluded successfully by the end of 1974. In consequence of these talks, the Shaikh-Centre Accord was concluded and Congress Ministry, headed by Mir Qasim relinquished power. Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah was sworn in as State's Chief Minister on February 24, 1975.

While assuming administrative power and joining the national mainstream, Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah hardly needed to be reminded that he had infused the Kashmiri blood with *hate-India* virus for more than two decades in the past. He even overlooked the promise made by his son, Dr. Farooq Abdullah, at Muzafarabad (Pak-occupied Kashmir) while attending the Convention of *Kashmir Liberation Front* alongwith Maqbool Bhat and Amanullah Khan, to work for establishing independent Kashmir. Now, for the Shaikh, the existence of Plebiscite Front was only superfluous and hence had to be done away with. A session of the Front was convened from July 5-7, 1975, at its headquarters, Mujahid Manzil, in which it was decided to dissolve the Plebiscite Front and resurrect the National Conference. A Convention of the National Conference was held at Jammu on March 27, 1976, in which the Shaikh was elected its President and Afzal Beg as Vice-President.

State Congress leadership tried to appropriate itself full credit for the political developments in the State in 1975. Since Qasim group had made way for the Shaikh to assume power, it expected every encouragement from him and even cherished hopes of receiving substantial representation in the Cabinet. But they were soon disillusioned when the Shaikh ignored and snubbed their claim, making them an ignominious entity. Congress could not establish itself in Kashmir because of its internal crisis, adhocism and weak leadership.

The induction of the Shaikh and his National Conference into power for the second time revealed some facts of Kashmir politics. It was now sufficiently established that Congress as the biggest national political Party had no future in Kashmir and that Kashmir affairs could not be handled without the active cooperation of State's acknowledged and popular leadership. It remained to be seen whether the Shaikh had undergone a real change of heart and joined the national mainstream in right earnest or whether it was yet another pretentious stance to grab power and have his own way. Maulvi Farooq was

very critical of the Shaikh for a shift in his stand and deviation from the slogan of plebiscite and right of self-determination. But soon after, Maulvi himself made a shift in his stand of self determination and joined hands with Indian nationalist leaders.

The youth in Kashmir were left bewildered on these sudden waverings of their political leaders, causing them deep confusion and frustration. Unable to trust their political commanders and maestroes any more, the innocent youth took arms to achieve the objective of self-determination and independence of Kashmir by resorting of violence. Obviously, the imperialist powers capitalized on these developments and boosted courage of youg Kashmiri militants through promises of money and material. The channels through which this assistance would flow were not far to seek.

5

Communist Movement

Prior to 1947, the major political party in Kashmir was National Conference. A few of its young and enthusiastic members, having received higher education in institutions outside the State, had come into contact with some people of progressive thought and outlook there. These young people played a prominent role in maintaining the democratic and secular direction of this major political party—the National Conference; and, in the process they came to be identified with a small group within the Party, who had a progressive thinking. In December 1948, a section of this progressive group within the Party was ousted. They were accused of being audacious enough to criticise the Shaikh for behaving in an autocratic and dictatorial manner. After its ouster, this small group of youngmen started working separately and opened a bookshop at Maisuma in Srinagar, where communist and other progressive literature was sold. Later on they shifted this shop to Gadha Singh building in Lal Chowk (Srinagar) and its management was entrusted to one, H.N. Durani. This small group formed the first nucleous of the State Communist (C.P.I) unit.

The unit organized peasants under *Gris Gand* and the youth under *Students Federation* and *Democratic Youth League*. But this unit of state C.P.I. merged with the National Conference again after the arrest and dismissal of the Shaikh in August, 1953.

Following Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah's arrest, National Conference was naturally weakened. However, as it tried to recoup, there appeared signs of crack in it. This culminated in the crisis of 1957 General Elections. The prominent members of progressive group left the National Conference alongwith their followers. They formed into a new Party called the "Democratic National Conference".

The new Party adopted a plough with three bars on red background as its flag and started an official organ, *Jammu Sandesh*. The Democratic National Conference functioned smoothly as a Party in opposition till 1960, when majority decided to merge with the parent organization—National Conference. A few of the members of the Democratic National Conference did not, however, reconcile themselves to this reunion and formed another new Party called the "Democratic Conference", with Ram Piara Saraf as its General Secretary.

The Party aligned itself with the Communist Party of India. Subsequently Ram Piara Saraf became a member of the National Council of the C.P.I. from the Jammu and Kashmir State. Krishen Dev Sethi and Ghulam Mohammad Malik became provincial secretaries for Jammu and Kashmir provinces respectively. A general meeting of the Party was held at Samba in the middle of 1960 in which the party flag was changed from plough and three bars with red background to red flag with hammer and scythe, and a State Committee was formed. The weekly *Jammu Sandesh* was taken over by this Party with Ram Piara Saraf as its printer, publisher and editor.

The Party could not make much headway in 1960-61. No doubt, in Jammu province the Party tried to penetrate into the

government low-paid employees, labourers, peasants, teachers and refugees. In 1962, the Party took part in general elections in Jammu Province and contested some seats, but failed to win any. However, Party boycotted the elections in Kashmir province.

In 1963-64, the Party activities remained confined to peasants only, and its leaders and workers devoted themselves in reorganising *Kisan Sabha*, which had been formed earlier. The Party could not make any appreciable impact because the jagirdari system had been abolished long back under the Big-landed Estates Abolition Act of 1950 in the State. Abdul Kabir Wani joined the Party in June 1964, on the persuation of Ghulam Mohammad Malik and became a prominent functionary in the Kashmir Kisan Sabha.

By the end of 1964, the Communist Party of India was split into two, and a separate all India Party, Communist Party of India (Marxist), was formed. This development had its direct impact on the Democratic Conference. Ram Piara Saraf changed his allegiance to the newly formed Party—Communist Party of India (Marxist), and his Party also became affiliated to it. The Communist Party of India (Marxist) had become pro-Chinese and the Democratic Conference also harboured pro-Chinese sentiments. The State government was perturbed with the activities of Democratic Conference and arrested Ram Piara Saraf, Kishen Dev Sethi, Ghulam Mohammad Malik and Abdul Kabir Wani. However, they were released by the end of June 1966. It was during these days that C.P.I. (R) came into existence in the State. A sizeable numbers of workers left the Democratic Conference, particularly in Kashmir province, and joined C.P.I. (R). To establish this Party here, Z.U. Ahmad also made frequent visits to the State. This dealt a severe blow to the Democratic Conference. However, efforts were made to rejuvinate the Party—Democratic Conference, and a meeting was held in Jammu in June-July, 1966. Harkishen Singh Surjit, a C.P.I.(M) activist from Punjab, also participated in this meeting; and the decision was taken to change the composition of the Party. Provincial Secretary's post was

abolished and instead District Committees were created, holding them directly responsible to the State Central Committee. Ghulam Mohammad Malik, Abdul Kabir Wani and Ghulam Mohammad Lone were appointed the Secretaries of Srinagar, Anantnag and Baramulla districts respectively. Krishan Dev Sethi, Mehta Bagwandas and Ved Pal Deep were elected the district secretaries in Jammu province. A State Central Committee was also formed with Ram Piara Saraf as its General Secretary. The other members elected for the Central Committee were: Krishan Dev Sethi, Ghulam Mohammad Malik, Abdul Kabir Wani, Nahar Singh and Ved Paul Deep.

In 1967, the Democratic Conference also participated in the Assembly Elections in accordance with the programme of the Communist Party of India (Marxist). The Party contested five Assembly seats in Kashmir and one Parliamentary seat in Jammu. Its election manifesto was on the same lines as that of the C.P.I. (M) in India. However, it could not get even a single seat. This failure dealt a severe below to the Party, frustrating its leadership and making most of its workers and sympathisers inactive. Following the setback in the elections and the weak response of the masses, a meeting of the Central Committee members was convened at Jammu in June-July, 1967, to review the Party position. In this meeting decisions were taken to lend active support to the low-paid government employees in their struggle for pay-increase, and further to organize the peasantry on revolutionary basis. Formation of Kisan Sabha to facilitate an uprising was also decided. Subsequently "Kissan-organizations" were formed at different places in Kashmir province. Abdul Kabir Wani was made incharge of all peasant problems in the State. In the opinion of State administrative authorities, it was done as a matter of strategy and political opportunism.

The Democratic Conference leaders instigated the low-paid government employees and the government school teachers to go on a "pen down" and "chalk down" strike. The government acted firmly and arrested some prominent leaders.

Ghulam Mohammad Malik and others were rounded up. Ram Piara Saraf and Krishen Dev Sethi went underground. But the agitation proved abortive and fizzled out. Ghulam Mohammad Malik and some others were released in early 1968.

Certain differences had overtaken Democratic Conference in 1968. A meeting was held at the house of Ram Piara Saraf at Samba. Besides discussing the Party issues, a decision to mobilize the peasantry for resisting the fertilizer-advance recovery was taken. The Kisan Sabha workers were directed to wrest the initiative in this connection from the Jana Sangh, which also had decided to organize resistance in rural areas. But the inner Party differences continued in Democratic Conference to wreck it from within and these came to a point of split, 'though not openly, with Ghulam Mohammad Malik and Abdul Kabir Wani opposing each other. The Central Committee, however, continued to work as one unit. The Party leaders, after breaking off their links with Communist Party of India (Marxist) which they dubbed as revolutionist, adopted the following as their future programme:

(a) Leninism and Maoism should be propagated;

(b) Struggle should be started against Marxists who were opposing pro-Chinese ideas;

(c) The new Party should work on pro-Chinese lines; and, workers and peasants should be educated according to Mao-Tse-Tung's teachings;

(d) An armed revolution should be worked for and brought about to liquidate the existing set up in the country.

This programme was drawn up in the light of what Naxalites preached and practised in those days. By May 1969, Democratic Conference had adopted the Naxalite approach to work out subversive programme. Ram Piara Saraf and Krishen Dev Sethi went to Calcutta, met the Communist Party of India (Marxist-L) leaders and expressed their allegiance to them. A

number of secret meetings were held by the leaders of the Party. One such meeting was reported to have been attended by Charu Mujamdar of Bengal, the Communist Party of India (Marxist-L) Chief, in a forest close to village Sikri in Samba in May 1970. It was attended by almost all the Party leaders. Ram Piara Saraf explained the Party programme in the meeting and said that they require three categories of volunteers and workers. These were:

1. Revolutionaries;
2. Whole-time workers; and
3. Sympathisers.

Revolutionaries were to engage themselves directly in armed struggle. Whole-time workers were to propagate the ideas of Mao among the peasants and other working classes for organising an armed revolution; and to enlist the sympathisers for the Party. The sympathisers were to provide shelter and food to the revolutionaries and collect funds for the Party. The revolutionaries were to be sent for guerilla training somewhere outside the State. On the completion of this training, they were to be supplied arms and ammunition for carrying out revolutionary activities in the State.

But the differences developed between Krishen Dev Sethi and Ram Piara Saraf immediately after the Sikri meeting. Krishen Dev Sethi is reported to have suggested to keep the Party activities in abeyance for the time being as, according to him, the people were not yet ready for proper response. But Ram Piara Saraf did not agree with his views. These differences increased and subsequently led to allegations and counter-allegations levelled against each other. As a result of these differences, the Party got divided into two rival groups. One group acknowledged the leadership of Ram Piara Saraf and Abdul Kabir Wani. Krishen Dev Sethi and other seven members of the State Committee led the other group. Some secret meetings were held and tours undertaken in April and May, 1970. One of the meeting was also attended by Ghulam

Mohammad Malik. Abdul Kabir Wani was reported to have taken a lot of interest in trying to patch up differences between Sethi and Saraf, but could not succeed. Sethi even alleged that Ram Piara Saraf had misused his position as Party chief, manoeuvred the *Jammu Sandesh* for his personal ends and had also misappropriated Party funds. Ultimately the publication of *Jammu Sandesh* was stopped.

In July, 1970, Krishen Dev Sethi became the new General Secretary of his group, while Joginder Singh Advocate was made the Provincial Secretary. A fresh campaign for the enrolment of members ensued. The following resolutions were also adopted in a secret meeting at Basohli on 10th and 11th July, 1970, convened under the chairmanship of Sethi:

I. A Red Volunteer Corps be organised to educate the Peasants;

II. Revolutionary Peasant Committees be formed in every village to implement the Party programme and built mass movement among the peasants;

(iii) The Cells be formed in every government department dealing with land and revenue matters so that the permanent land-revenue record can be destroyed;

(iv) Youth be organised by holding study circles;

(v) The slogans "not to pay rent to landlords and tax to the government" be raised;

(vi) The fallow land and other government land be forcibly occupied;

(vii) The Mao's thoughts be propagated amongst masses and propaganda be made to establish friendly relations with China;

(viii) To expose the policy and activities of Communist Party of India (Marxist);

(ix) Boycott the elections;

(x) Introduce trade unionism among labour to wipe out exploitation by the government and capitalists.

It was also decided by the group members to continue their struggle against the imperialist and feudalist powers. The Party also decided not to enter into any electoral alliance with any political party in general elections (1972). It even accused the Soviet leadership as defective in so far as the Soviet government was suspected in collusion with the American foreign policy. The policies of China were appreciated as being in live with the true communist doctrines. It was in July 1970 that the Party had started publishing a monthly magazine, *Nukta Nazar*.

Ram Piara Saraf continued his underground activities and formed a separate group with Daya Krishen Khajoriya and Ram Prakash Saraf as his immediate lieutenants. This group received patronage and recognition from Communist Party of India (Marxist-L). But after the arrest and detention of Saraf, this group faded away.

The publication of *Nukta Nazar* continued. It claimed that Democratic Conference is against the extremist policies of the Marxist-Leninist leadership and no ideology can flourish by murdering individuals. The struggle, according to the Party programme, should be intensified and accelerated. Public meetings were held in Jammu by the members of Sethi group. The Party posters advocated for the boycott of Assembly Elections as people had to get their problems solved through revolutionary struggle. The working class was also inspired by the Party to struggle for its salvation and prosperity. Harkishen Singh Surjit, a Communist Party of India (Marxist) activist from Punjab, visited Jammu in May, 1971, to reorganize the Party.

In Kashmir, Ghulam Mohammad Malik and Abdul Kabir Wani also convened the Party meetings. They explained to the participants that the Party like Communist Party of India (Marxist-L) had discorded the parliamentary path, and

its aim should be to organise the peasantry. They also discussed with their party-workers the Kashmir issue and emphasised, as a matter of strategy, that accession to India was not final nor irrevocable. The party-workers were asked to advocate the secessionist views to attract the sentimental pro-Pak youth. Exploitation of cordial Sino-Pak relations had good impact over pro-Pak elements and some youth joined hands with the Malik group.

Malik group declared to work as an independent group in Kashmir. But Abdul Kabir Wani did not see eye to eye with Malik and maintained close ties with Jammu leaders. Malik was interested to liquidate the present system in the State. He strived hard to carry out the programme of the Party and took a number of steps in that direction ranging from indoctrinating and organising the students and youth. He held a number of meetings and asked the participants to carry out the revised Party programme. He even encouraged his party-workers to contact their close extremist acquintances in other political parties. Munshi Mohammad Ishaq, an extremist in the Plebiscite Front, fell to the approach of Malik and promised his support. Malik then formed a students organization, Progressive Students and Youth Front. Maharaj Krishen Dass was put as incharge of this new organisation. Malik also estabilised his links with pro-Pak elements.

In Kashmir, Communist movement liquidated by 1972, when most of its leaders were arrested. In fact, the communists were aware that political atmosphere in Kashmir was different from the one prevailing in India. They even raised the slogan of self-determination and plebiscite in the Valley only to attract the masses for subversive activities, but could not consolidate their position and faded away.

6

Biographical Sketches

1. Abdullah, Shaikh Mohammad

Born at Soura (Srinagar) in 1905. He got M.Sc. (Chemistry) from Aligarh and was appointed as a teacher in the Government State High School, Srinagar. He started his political career in 1931 when he came into contact with some local Muslim leaders. He later resigned from government service and came into active politics. In 1933, he suffered short-term imprisonment. In 1934 he went to Lahore to establish relations with the Indian national leaders. State government also banned his entry into the Jammu and Kashmir territory, but the order was later cancelled. He also took part in the state Praja Sabha elections. In 1938, he was arrested and later released. He was elected Vice-President of the All India States Peoples' Conference and later as its President. In 1943, he started "Quit Kashmir" movement against the Maharaja. He was arrested and prosecuted for sedition. But he was released at the time of Pakistan infiltration in the State. During the State Peoples' Movement, he spent more than 9 years in prison. In 1947, he attended the United Nations meeting as a member of the Indian Delegation. He was instrumental in managing the Kashmir's accession to India. In December 1947,

he assumed power as Head of the Emergency Administration and later on as Prime Minister of the State. He continued as Prime Minister up to August 9, 1953, when he was dismissed and detained. In 1958, he was released but detained again after about a period of three months and prosecuted under *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*. The case was withdrawn in 1964. He was arrested again in May 1965 for his subversive activities and released in January 1968. On October 11, 1968, he convened the State Peoples' Convention for ascertaining consensus of opinion regarding solution to the Kashmir problem. Again, in January 1971, ban was imposed on him to enter into the State, which was lifted in June 1972. He resumed the power in 1976 as Chief Minister of Jammu and Kashmir State. Throughout his political career, he remained in detention for more than 18 years. He possessed the mass-control ability.

2. Bakshi, Ghulam Mohammad

Born at Srinagar in 1907. He started his career as a school teacher. Joined National Conference as one of its founding members and courted imprisonment four times during the State Peoples' Movement. He played a prominent part in mobilizing Indian opinion during the "Quit Kashmir" movement. In 1947, he was appointed as Deputy Head of the Administration in the Emergency Government of the State. In 1951, he was elected member of the Constituent Assembly from Safakadal (Srinagar); and worked as Deputy Prime Minister in the Shaikh administration till August 9, 1953. He was the person who took over as Prime Minister of the State after the dismissal and detention of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, and remained in the office up to 1963. He advocated and supported the accession of Kashmir with India.

3. Bazaz, Prem Nath

Born at Srinagar in 1905. He graduated from Panjab University in 1927 and was appointed as Supervisor of Women's Welfare Trust, Girls Schools, in Srinagar. He worked

as member of the Kashmir State Grievances Enquiry Commission and the Constitutional Reforms Conference in 1931. He started the publication of daily *Vitasta* in 1932. He also founded weekly *Hamdard* in collaboration with the Shaikh. He was imprisoned in 1938 for 6 months, in 1947 for three years and in 1955 for one year. He was also externed from Kashmir in 1950. In Delhi, he started the monthly *Voice of Kashmir*. He was inspired by the wavering sentiments of Shaikh Mohammad Abdullah, and supported his slogans of plebiscite and self-determination for the people of Kashmir.

4. Beg, Mirza Mohammad Afzal

Born at Anantnag (Kashmir) in 1908, he joined politics in 1931. In 1938, he was elected to the State Praja Sabha. He was arrested in 1943 alongwith other National Conference leaders for participating in "Quit Kashmir" movement. After the accession of Kashmir with India, he was appointed to head the administration in Anantnag district. When the Shaikh constituted his first Cabinet in the State, he became the Revenue Minister. He was detained alongwith the Shaikh on August 9, 1953. When he was released in 1955, he formed a new political organization, Plebiscite Front. The aim of this Organisation was to secure the right of self-determination for the people of Kashmir. He was also prosecuted alongwith the Shaikh under the *Kashmir Conspiracy Case*. In 1964, he was released when the case was withdrawn against the accused. Visited Pakistan alongwith the Shaikh in 1964. In 1965, he went to Hajj pilgrimage alongwith the Shaikh, was arrested for his prejudicial activities and released in 1967. In January 1971, ban was imposed on him to enter into the State, which was lifted in May, 1972. He was instrumental in Shaikh-Indira Accord in 1975, which brought the Shaikh back to power.

5. Farooq, Maulvi Mohammad

Born at Rajouri Kadal (Srinagar) in 1944. He received some religious education at his home at the age of seven years. He passed Maulvi from the Jammu and Kashmir University in

1957. In 1959, he passed Maulvi Alam and in 1961 Maulvi Fazil. He passed matriculation (English) examination in 1960. In 1961, he was appointed in Government Primary School, Sekidafar (Srinagar), as Arabic teacher where he worked for about seven months on a monthly pay of Rs. 75. Maulvi Attiquallh, Mirwaiz-i-Kashmir and grandfather of Maulvi Farooq, passed away on April 30, 1962; and the Maulvi became the Mirwaiz. In 1963, he grabbed the Holy Relic episode. He developed contacts with other political leaders of the State. He became the President of the Holy Relic Action Committee. Inspired by the Shaikh, he formed a new political Party in June 1964, Awami Action Committee; and demanded self-determination for the people of Kashmir. He was detained in 1965 for prejudicial activities and released in 1967. He propagated the secessionist views and was very critical to Shaikh-Indira Accord of 1975. He himself joined hands with Indian nationalist leaders in 1977.

6. Fotedar, Shiv Narayan

Born at Srinagar. After completing M.A. (History) he joined the government service as Lecturer. But soon he resigned from the service and joined politics. He was elected as President of Yovak Sabha (Srinagar) and occupied the office up to 1949. He also remained an activist of All State Kashmiri Pandit Conference. In 1949, he joined National Conference and was nominated as a member of the State Legislative Council by the Shaikh. In 1954, he was elected Chairman of the Legislative Council and retired from the position in 1972. After his retirement, he renewed his political contacts and participated in active politics of the State.

7. Kara, Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din

Born at Batmaloo (Srinagar) in 1916. He joined Muslim Conference in 1935. When the Party was renamed as National Conference, he became its prominent activist. In 1939, he was elected as District President of the Party for Srinagar. In 1943, when the Shaikh launched the "Quit Kashmir"

movement, he dynamically worked for it as underground leader. His enthusiasm gave him the title of "Bulbul-i-Kashmir". During 1947 Pakistan infiltration, he played an important role in maintaining the law and order in the Valley. But soon he developed some differences with the Shaikh and resigned from the Party. He organized a new Party, "Kashmir Political Conference", with the aim of annexing Kashmir to Pakistan. He was detained for prejudical activities in June 1953, and released in December 1954. After the release of Mirza Afzal Beg in 1955, he joined hands with him for sometime. He was detained again in October 1955, and released in June 1960. In 1964, during Holy Relic Movement, he joined hands with Maulvi Farooq and became member of the Holy Relic Action Committee. He was again arrested in October 1965 and released in December 1967. In July 1968, he was elected as President of Bar Association, Srinagar. His pro-Pak sentiments were due to political frustration. He was again detained in February 1972 ands ubsequently released in April 1972. After his release, he confirmed the accession of Kashmir with India as final. In his statement on March 17, 1975, he considered the demand of plebiscite as meaningless. He was instrumental in establishing the Janta Party in Kashmir with the active support of Maulana Syed Masoodi and Maulvi Farooq in 1977.

8. Masoodi, Maulana Mohammad Syed

Born at Ganderbal (Kashmir). He joined the active politics in 1938 when Muslim Conference was renamed as National Conference and he became its first General Secretary. He was arrested and prosecuted when the Shaikh gave the call for "Quit Kashmir" movement. He was released in 1947. After the arrest of the Shaikh in 1953, he isolated himself from politics. He was however, arrested in 1958 in a conspiracy and murder case which took place in Hazratbal. But the Case was withdrawn after sometime against him. He very actively participated in the Holy Relic Movement. In 1964, he visited Pakistan alongwith the Shaikh. He was detained for prejudicial activities in December 1965. In 1972, he was detained and released after sometime. After 1974, he began to

patronage Awami Action Committee Chief, Maulvi Farooq. He was also instrumental in bringing the Maulvi to national mainstream.

9. Qasim, Syed Mir

Born at Anantnag (Kashmir) in 1921. He entered politics as student and was elected as Secretary of the S.P. College Students Union, Srinagar. He got the M.A. and LL.B. degrees from Aligarh. He was elected Tehsil President and District Vice-President of the National Conference Organization in Anantnag. He was also elected to the Chairman of Anantnag Tehsil Council. In 1951, he was elected to the State Constituent Assembly from Duroo. In 1952, he became Chief Parliamentary Secretary and was appointed as Revenue Minister of the State in 1973. He was also appointed as Secretary of the Constitution Drafting Committee. During the Chief Ministership of Ghulam Mohammad Sadiq, he worked as the State Congress Chief. He became the Chief Minister after the death of Sadiq. He was the person who stepped down as Chief Minister in 1976 after the Shaikh-Indira Accord was signed. The Chief Ministership was offered to the Shaikh.

10. Sadiq, Ghulam Mohammad

Born at Srinagar in 1912. He was educated locally and graduated in Law from Aligarh in 1934. It was in 1930 that he became the first President of College Union in the State. He represented the people of Kashmir before Riot Enquiry Committee in 1932 and was elected to the State Legislative Assembly in 1934. In 1938, he courted arrest while agitating against the Dogra autocratic rule. He was the Chairman of Muslim Conference in 1939, when it was converted as National Conference He was elected the Deputy Leader of National Conference Assembly Party. In 1947, during the tribal infiltration, he was appointed as Emergency Officer and organized the National Militia of Volunteers. He worked as Development Minister from 1948 to 1951, during the Shaikh administration On October 31, 1951, he was elected the President of

State Constituent Assembly. In 1953, he was appointed Health and Education Minister. He was also the founder-President of the Kashmir Cultural Congress, and Chairman of Kashmir Peace Committee. He became the first Congress Chief Minister of the State.

11. Saraf, Ram Piara

Born at Samba (Jammu) in 1925. After completing the graduation in 1944, he was employed as a teacher in a high school. In 1946, he passed M.A. (History) from Panjab University. In 1947, he joined the Punjab National Bank at Lahore as apprentice, but resigned soon after. He then joined the active politics and became a member of National Conference. In 1951, he was elected to the State Legislature. In 1957, he left the National Conference alongwith some other associates and formed a new political Party, Democratic National Conference. In December 1960, most of his colleagues rejoined the National Conference, but he refused to do so alongwith Krishen Dev Sethi and maintained the existence of Democratic National Conference. In 1961, the Party got affiliated with the Communist Party of India (Marxist). In 1962, the Party contested the general elections only to be humiliated. In 1964, Saraf and Sethi separated. In 1965, Saraf was arrested for prejudicial activities, only to be released in May 1966. In October 1966, he went underground to organize and inspire the government employees. He instigated the employees to fight for their rights. On March 2, 1971, he was arrested and subsequently released on February 26, 1973.

12. Sethi, Krishen Dev

Born at Mirpur. After passing the matriculation examination he joined college, but gave up education because of financial crisis. He went to Deoband to study Arabic. He joined National Conference at an early age alongwith Raj Mohammad Akbar Khan Mirpuri. In 1947, he suffered imprisonment for a short period. He also served as Propaganda

Officer in Rajouri for sometime. In 1953, he joined the Democratic Youth League. He was also elected to the State Legislative Assembly. In 1957, he left National Conference with some colleagues and founded the Democratic National Conference. In 1961, a split occurred in the Democratic National Conference when some members rejoined the National Conference and he continued to work with Ram Piara Saraf. He was arrested for prejudicial activities in December 1964, and released in 1966. In December 1966, he went underground when a warrant of arrest was issued against him. He inspired the low-paid employees agitation of 1967. There developed some differences between Saraf and Sethi, resulting in their separation. Sethi continued to work in newly organized, Democratic Conference; while Saraf joined the Communist Party of India (Marxist-L). Sethi followed the guidelines of Communist Party of India (Marxist) and tried to sneak into Kissan Sabha. He engaged himself in the organizational work and consolidated his ties with Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Kissan Sabha.

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